DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 295 298 EA 020 032

AUTHOR	Budde, Ray
TITLE	Education by Charter: Restructuring School Districts. Key to Long-Term Continuing Improvement in American Education.
INSTITUTION	Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast & Islands, Andover, MA.
PUB DATE	86
NOTE	126p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Publication Sales, Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands, 290 South Main Street, Andover, MA 01810 ($12.00 plus $2.50 postage and handling).
PUB TYPE	Viewpoints (120) -- Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)
EDRS PRICE	MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Administrative Principles; Administrator Role; Educational Change; Educational Planning; Elementary Secondary Education; *Organizational Change; *Organizational Development; *School District Reorganization; Superintendents

ABSTRACT

This booklet proposes a 10-year plan for restructuring local school districts entitled "Education by Charter." An introductory section cites current demands for educational reform and cites proposed remedies in order to suggest that nothing short of fundamental change in the internal organization of the school district will sustain and incorporate these needed reforms. The next section addresses the challenge of reorganizing the school district by analyzing the long-term evolution of the school district, the structural elements of the present organization, pressures on the present organization, and goals and tools for reorganization. The main section, "Education by Charter: Restructuring School Districts," sets forth a hypothetical scenario, "Hometown Public Schools," to illustrate the process of reorganizing a school district over the next 10 years. Ten "Events" are portrayed to dramatize this process. Of these, the fourth event is an extended explanation of the key concept, "Education by Charter." The summary presents 12 goals of reorganization, discusses other strategies for reorganizing a school district, and touches on the costs and on the relationship of school district reorganization to other reforms. Twenty-seven references are included. (TE)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

Education by Charter:
[illegible] School Districts

Key to long-term continuing improvement in American Education

by Ray Budde

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
D. P. Crandall
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast & Islands

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

EA 020 032

Education by Charter: Restructuring School Districts

Key to long-term continuing improvement in American education

Ray Budde

1988

The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast & Islands

Copyright © 1988 Ray Budde

Published by

The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement
of the Northeast & Islands
290 South Main Street
Andover, Massachusetts 01810
(617) 470-0098

All other reforms are conditioned upon reform in the quality and character of those who engage in the teaching profession.

— John Dewey, 1903

CONTENTS

Preface

1 **Need to Reorganize School Districts**
10 Challenge of Reorganizing the School District
18 Goals and Tools for Reorganization
23 **Education by Charter: Restructuring School Districts**

Life Cycle of an Educational Charter

39 Stage 1. Generating Ideas
42 Stage 2. Planning the Charter
45 Stage 3. Preparing for Teaching
45 Stage 4. Teaching under the Charter
46 Stage 5. Program Monitoring and Evaluation
68 Reorganized K-12 Functions/Services
75 New Organizational Chart
78 Plan for Staffing K-12 Functions
80 The "Septuple School Calendar"
95 **Summary and Other Considerations**
102 References

FIGURES

13 Figure 1. Organizational Chart — Hometown Public Schools A Typical Medium Size School District of 4550 Pupils

35 Figure 2. Charter between Henry Hudson and the Directors of the East India Company

40 Figure 3. Five Stages in the Life Cycle of a Three-Year Educational Charter

59 Figure 5. Humanities Program for Juniors and Seniors Hometown Public Schools — 1991-1996

69 Figure 6. The Hexagon of Knowledge for Persons Age 10 and Older — Curriculum Structure for the Hometown Public Schools 1995-2005

77 Figure 7. Organizational Relationships — Hometown Public Schools 1995-2005

83 Figure 8. Septuple School Calendar — 1996-1997 School Year Hometown Public Schools

85 Figure 9. Analysis of 261 Weekdays — Fiscal/School Year Starting July 1, 1996 and Ending June 30, 1997

86 Figure 10. Septuple Credit System

87 Figure 11. "S" Units of Credit for Various Length Courses During Terms of Different Length

Preface

In the second act of Hugo's *Les Misérables*, after the revolution has failed and all seems lost, a lament rises from the now deserted barricade, "Nothing ever changes; nothing ever will!"

Given the tendency of American education to swing from status quo to reform and back to status quo, we cannot help but wonder; Will the present education reform movement result in sustained education improvement for all students? Or will it, before this century ends, sputter to a halt? And will some observer cry, "American education never changes; and it never will!"?

We hope that this time the reforms take hold. That this time the recommendations become a reality —sustained, continuing, and long-term.

The Regional Laboratory is dedicated to helping school people initiate and sustain long-term change. We remind people involved in school improvement efforts that change is a process that requires ongoing attention and nurturing. Sustained school improvement can only be achieved through continuous and dynamic processes that require strong commitment, effective analysis and planning, a climate supportive of change, and ongoing evaluation of improvement activities.

Ray Budde and I have had numerous conversations about the subtleties and challenges of achieving genuine change in school organizations. This kind of change is difficult to achieve and certainly cannot be reached within the confines of a single, September-to-June school year. Indeed, Dr. Budde has Bill Wright, the superintendent in the case study that comprises a major portion of *Education by Charter*, propose a ten-year plan for restructuring the Hometown Public Schools.

In his ten years as superintendent in Hometown, Bill is able, through his vision of education by charter, to incorporate many of the current reform recommendations into the very fabric of the school district organization:

- School board members become better acquainted with classroom programs and curriculum.
- Teachers gain more autonomy in the classroom and more decision-making power in instructional matters.
- Students assume responsibility for their own learning and behavior.
- Teacher career development plans and inservice education activities become more closely linked with the instructional and program needs of the school.
- The school calendar changes from a ten-month, rural-based school year to a longer year for students and a full-time, twelve-month work year for faculty.
- The role of principal is revitalized as creator of safe, positive environments for learning and supporter of teachers, who are responsible for instruction.
- The computer and other emerging technologies are applied widely in curriculum, planning, and research.
- Research and professional contributions are integrated with the needs of the district.
- Permanent functions solicit and encourage the active participation of parents and persons from business and other vocations in the education of the children and youth of the community.

Education by Charter is offered as one model for restructuring the local school district. There are others, of course, just as there are other ways to restructure a school, a department of education, a professional association, a teacher training institution, or any organization.

The Regional Laboratory is pleased to publish *Education by Charter: Restructuring School Districts* as part of its continuing series of books and articles promoting improvement in American Education.

David P. Crandall, Executive Director
The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands

Our little systems have their day;
They have their day and cease to be...

— Alfred Lord Tennyson

Need to Reorganize School Districts

1 Call for Education Reform
3 Proposed Remedies
5 Recommendations for Reorganization
10 Challenge of Reorganizing the School District

Call for Educational Reform

"Educational reform," "school improvement," or simply, "We've got to do something about our public schools" seem very much on the minds of Americans in the late 1980's. It is worthwhile to read some excerpts from reports of the various commissions and study groups concerned about the present state of public education in America.

From the report of the National Commission on Education, which was formed early in President Reagan's first term in office and made its report in 1983:

> Our nation is at risk. Our once unchallenged preeminence in commerce, industry, and technological innovation is being overtaken by competitors throughout the world...Knowledge, learning, information, and skilled intelligence are the new raw materials of international commerce...If only to keep and improve on the slim competitive edge we still retain in world markets, we must dedicate ourselves to the reform of our educational system for the benefit of all — old and young alike, affluent and poor, majority and minority. Learning is the indispensable investment required for success in the "information age" we are entering...
>
> [E]ducational reform should focus on the goal of creating a Learning Society. At the heart of such a society is the commitment to a set of values and to a system of education that affords all members the opportunity to stretch their minds to full capacity, from early childhood through adulthood, learning more as the world itself changes. Such a society has as a basic foundation the idea that education is important not only because of what it contributes to one's career goals but also because of the value it adds to the general quality of one's life...In our view, formal schooling in youth is the essential foundation for learning throughout one's life...
>
> And where there should be a coherent continuum of learning, we have none, but instead an often incoherent, outdated patchwork quilt...Our findings and testimony confirm the vitality of a number of notable schools and programs, but their very distinction stands out against a vast mass shaped by tensions and pressures that inhibit systematic academic and vocational achievement for the majority of students...And the ideal of academic excellence as the primary goal of schooling seems to be fading across the board in America...[1]

Four years later, the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy in the report of its Task Force on Teaching as a Profession again put the spotlight on education.

> America's ability to compete in world markets is eroding. The productivity growth of our competitors outdistances our own. The capacity of our economy to provide a high standard of living for all our people is increasingly in doubt...Large numbers of American children are in limbo — ignorant of the past and unprepared for the future. Many are dropping out — not just out of school but out of productive society.
>
> As in past economic and social crises, Americans turn to education...They have reaffirmed the belief that the aim for greater productivity is not in conflict with the development of independent and creative minds. There is a new concensus on the urgency of making our schools once again engines of progress, productivity, and prosperity.[2]

And the very title *Time for Results: The Governors' 1991 Report on Education* indicates both that "something substantial should change in American education" and that "something" should happen in the next five years.

> Better schools mean better jobs. Unless states face these questions, Americans won't keep our high standard of living. To meet stiff competition from workers in the rest of the world, we must educate ourselves and our children as we never have before...
>
> The nation — and the states and school districts — need better report cards about results, and about what students know and can do...

> American public education has fallen into some deep ruts. Some of the changes that need to be made are so deep and will take so long that unless the Governors push, small changes will be labeled reforms and nothing will happen except spending more money...
>
> No one else can set the agenda in a state the way a Governor can...The Governors are in this for the long haul...Governors want a new compact with professional educators in America so we can lead a coalition of *everyone* interested in better schools. We want to take the next steps together...[3]

Calls for reform of American education are not new. Calls have been sounded during other times and under other circumstances. Hopefully, the foregoing excerpts from the studies have provided an indication of the ferment and tenor of these times, the late 1980's.

Proposed Remedies

Much of the impetus behind the current reform movement in education is the conviction of many leaders in American society that the United States is losing the battle in the world economic marketplace. "Doing something about the public schools" is seen as one of the major solutions for this problem. Proposed remedies for the public schools' current set of ills abound.

Curriculum content must become more rigorous and graduation requirements strengthened. Students must be given more homework. The school day and the school year should be lengthened.

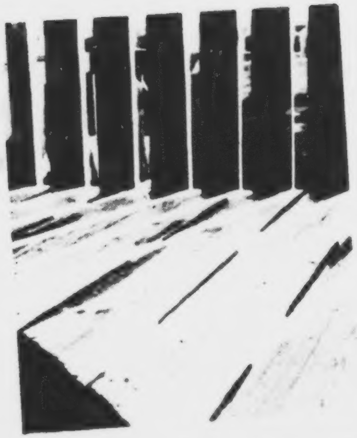
Teachers must be made accountable for the results (or lack of results) achieved by their students. Incompetent teachers should be fired. The more able teachers should work a longer professional year and be paid substantially higher salaries. Teachers should have the opportunity of advancing through a number of distinct levels during their careers.

It is hoped that higher salary levels and more prestigious opportunities will attract higher quality beginners into preparation programs. Undergraduate preparation programs should be scrapped in favor of field-centered graduate programs. Entering students will have earned a bachelors degree in a substantive academic area.

And the list of needed reforms goes on. Quality daycare centers and preschool programs must be made more available to poor and minority families. Early prevention programs must be initiated in elementary and junior high school for at-risk boys and girls. A concerted effort has to be made at the high school level to reduce the growing number of dropouts.

The number of business-education partnerships should be greatly increased. A major goal of these efforts should be to put realism into the training of young people for the changing world of work.

Each of these proposed remedies has merit. If all were implemented during the next five years, the face of American public education would surely be changed. It is not likely, however, that all these major changes will occur in any kind of connected, coordinated way within five years. The battle line will be a jagged one: significant changes will be made in some areas; modest changes will be made to address other problems; and elsewhere stalemate or even retreat will be the order of the day.



Recommendations for Reorganization

The changes and reforms being sought in American education are important and are long overdue. I believe that little long-term progress will be made on any front unless the local school district — where teaching and learning actually take place — is organized in a substantially new and different way.

Changing the internal organization of the school district would involve making substantial changes in the roles of teachers, principals, the superintendent, the school board, parents, and others in the community. What do the reformers have to say about changing the roles of the main actors on the local educational scene?

Changing the role of the teacher

First a voice from the distant past — John Dewey writing in a 1903 issue of *The Elementary School Teacher:*

> Until the public school system is organized in such a way that every teacher has some regular and representative way in which he or she can register judgment upon matters of educational importance, with the assurance that this judgment will somehow affect the school system, the assertion that the present system is not, from the internal standpoint, democratic seems to be justified.
>
> What does democracy mean save that the individual is to have a share in determing the conditions and the aims of his own work and that on the whole, through the free and mutual harmonizing of different individuals, the work of the world is better done than when planned, arranged, and directed by a few, no matter how wise or of how good intent that few...
>
> If the teaching force is inept and unintelligent and irresponsible, surely the primary problem is that of their improvement. Only by sharing in some responsible task does there come a fitness to share in it. The argument that we must wait until men and women are fully ready to assume intellectual and social responsibilities would have defeated every step in the democratic direction that has ever been taken...[4]

And eighty years later, in *A Nation at Risk*, giving teachers an eleven-month contract and establishing career ladders are seen as two means for improving teaching.

> School boards should adopt an 11-month contract for teachers. This would insure time for curriculum and professional development...
>
> School boards, administrators, and teachers should cooperate to develop career ladders for teachers that distinguish among the beginning instructor, the experienced teacher, and the master teacher.[5]

The Carnegie report calls for more teacher autonomy, collegial styles of decision making, and support staff for teachers.

> Teachers should have...the ability to work with other people in work groups that decide for themselves how to get the job done...
>
> Teachers must think for themselves,...be able to act independently and collaborate with others, and render critical judgment...
>
> Teachers should be provided with the discretion and autonomy that are the hallmarks of professional work...
>
> Districts should foster collegial styles of decisionmaking and teaching in schools in which "Lead Teachers" play a central role...
>
> Teachers should be provided the support staff they need to be more effective and productive, and should be prepared to take responsibility for overseeing the work of additional staff with a range of skills and experience...
>
> School districts should consider a variety of approaches to school leadership...[6]

In a paper written for this study, Denis Doyle sees as one alternative a school turned over to teachers.

> [I]t is possible to imagine teachers running their own schools within the public sector: a single building in a large system could be given the professional autonomy to manage itself, both administratively and substantially. Teachers could select their own administrator — who would work for them or be one of them — and by doing so restore the original meaning of the term principal: principal teacher...
>
> Teachers, however, if they take the issue of professionalism seriously, have it within their power to forge a new institution and a new set of relationships to make it work, for both consumers and providers...Schools can emerge from their historic foundations, laid in the industrial revolution, to new foundations laid in the modern, post-industrial society.[7]

In *Time for Results: The Governors' 1991 Report on Education*, an even stronger case is made for organizational changes which would let teachers be responsible for the instruction function. From the report of the Task Force on Teaching:

> [There should be] more than one educational leader. Teachers will have to be involved in decisions about discipline, school goals, their own continuing education, curriculum, and schoolwide problem solving. It also requires a new definition of the principal's job.[8]

And from the report of the Task Force on Leadership and Management:

> Organizing for improvement will require extensive leadership, some of which must come from teachers. Decisions must be made closer to the classroom.
>
> In a restructured school, different teachers will play different roles...Career ladders will increase variety and responsibility in teaching and improve the skills of teachers.[9]

Changing the principal's role

Changing the principal's role can be viewed as the flip-side of changing the role of teachers: the principal has "x" amount of decision-making power; to create a more effective school, a portion of this power, say one half of "x", now has to be taken away from the principal and given to the teachers; or perhaps as suggested by Mr. Doyle in a particular alternative school, all of "x" is taken from the principal and given to the teachers — thus creating a teacher-run school. The recommendations of the reformers do not propose such a simplistic transfer of power.

In *A Nation at Risk*, there is no recommendation to remove any power from the principal (or from the superintendent). Indeed, the wording implies that these two positions be strengthened through further training. The principal and the superintendent are to continue to play "crucial leadership roles," and the leadership skills to be developed (or improved) involve "persuasion, setting goals and developing community concensus behind them, and managerial and supervisory skills."[10]

In the Carnegie report, a more open stance is taken with regard to school leadership and the role of the principal.

> No organization can function well without strong and effective leadership and schools are no exception. But the single model for leadership found in most schools is better suited to business or government than to the function of education. The model of the non-teaching principal as head of the school can work in support of the collegial style of schooling we propose, but there are many other models that should be tried.
>
> Among them are schools headed by Lead Teachers acting as a committee, one of whom acts like a managing partner in a professional partnership. In such schools, the teachers might hire the administrators rather than the other way around.

> Once the fundamental idea that the primary source of expertise for improving schools lies within them [teachers], many ways to organize for leadership are possible.[11]

The Task Force on Teaching would require "a new definition of the principal's job, to emphasize his or her responsibility to develop and use the leadership, professionalism and participation of teachers"; however, some twenty pages later in the same main report, the Task Force on Leadership and Management recommends only that preparation and inservice programs for principals be upgraded so that they can provide leadership for "school improvement."[12]

The most radical proposal in all of the reports calling for educational reform is found in one of the "Supporting Works" of the governors' study. Roland Barth, Co-Director of the Principals' Center at Harvard University, proposes a very different kind of school, one which, if brought into being, would require a dramatic change in the role of the principal (as well as changes in roles of everyone else associated with the school).

> I see...the concept of a school as a *community of learners*, a place where everyone is engaged in learning and teaching — teachers, principal, parents and students...
>
> The central question for a community of learners is not "what should they know and do and how to get them to know and do it," but rather "under what conditions will principal and student and teacher become serious, committed, sustained, lifelong, cooperative learners?"...
>
> [This leads] to some fresh thinking about the culture of the school and what people do there. For instance, the principal need no longer be "head teacher" pretending to know, one who consumes lists from above and propagates lists to those below. The more crucial role of the principal is as "head learner," engaging in the most important enterprise of the school, experiencing, displaying, modeling, and celebrating what is hoped and expected readers and pupils will do. . . .[13]

Role of the school board and superintendent

Only one of the reports calling for educational reform would alter the traditional roles of the school board and the superintendent. This lone exception is the report of a study done by the Institute for Educational Leadership entitled *School Boards — Strengthening Grass Roots Leadership.* This is the latest of the reports and seems to be in response to the content of the earlier reports and expresses a theme of: "Hey wait, don't forget that the school board and the superintendent are key players in this game of educational reform!"

> ...So far, improvement has been stimulated by state policymakers. Governors and legislators, often buttressed by or responding to civic and business leaders, have initiated unprecedented efforts to improve the quality of public education.
>
> For the most part, these state-level initiatives have bypassed local school boards. School boards feel they have, at best, been only peripherally involved, that they have been cast in a passive role and are perceived as reactors rather than partners in shaping changes.
>
> Yet, the national agenda is now being cast as states try implementing recent policy initiatives and face the complexities of restructuring education at the school district and classroom levels. The success or failure of these efforts rests squarely with local school boards, teachers, administrators and communities. Because school boards are charged by states and localities to make policy and govern local public education, their willingness and capacity to lead, in large measure, will determine the long-range success or failure of school improvement efforts.[14]

The study is based on responses (and analysis of responses) from 216 chairpersons and 1,350 board members in nine metropolitan areas. Over 54% of the sample came from suburban areas; 35% small town/rural; and 11% urban. About threefourths of the respondents were from districts with 5,000 or fewer pupils. Most of the remaining 25% were from districts of 36,000 pupils or over.

The need for change was voiced with rather deep feelings in the selected quotations which preceded sections of the report. From a school board member in California, "There always seems to be additional information that causes us to change our minds." A Colorado member responded, "From our perspective, the major issue is the state effort to usurp local control and make school districts holding companies for the state." Deep frustrations were expressed by two other respondents, "We tear each other up" and "We don't discuss education."

In the concluding chapter, "indicators" of an effective board are listed. For some of these indicators to become realities, there would need to be a redefinition of the major roles within the school district — including the roles of the school board and superintendent. The first nine indicators, in particular, might be realized if there were important changes in the school district organization.

1. An effective board addresses most of its time and energy to education and educational outcomes.
2. An effective board believes that advocacy for the educational interests of children and youth is its primary responsibility.
3. An effective board concentrates on goals and uses strategic planning to accomplish its purposes.
4. An effective board works to ensure an adequate flow of resources and achieves equity in their distribution.
5. An effective board harnesses the strengths in diversity, integrates special needs and interests into the goals of the system and fosters both assertiveness and cooperation.
6. An effective board deals openly and straightforwardly with controversy.
7. An effective board leads the community in matters of public education, seeking and responding to many forms of participation by the community.
8. An effective board exercises continuing oversight of education programs and their management, draws information for this purpose from many sources and knows enough to ask the right questions.
9. An effective board, in consultation with its superintendent, works out and periodically reaffirms the separate areas of administrative and policy responsibilities and how these separations will be maintained.[15]

Changing the role of parents

No substantial change in the role of parents is seen *within* the organization of the local schools. "School Councils," on which parents are represented, are increasing in number and may, eventually, be more than advisory in nature.

The Task Force on Parent Involvement and Choice of the governors' study devoted a great deal of effort to investigating the need for and the advantages of parents being able to choose the school their children attend.

> One way to alter the relationship between parents and educators is to permit families to select among various public schools...
>
> Families have greater commitment to education programs they select; educators find it easier to work with families who have made a conscious selection...
>
> Allan Odden of the National Institute of Education testified to the task force: "Effective schools have distinctive cultures; students and teachers who do not fit the culture are uncomfortable with it. Giving parents and

> students more choices regarding public schools to attend could not only strengthen the culture of each school, but also improve public satisfaction."[16]

The fact of having choice of school may not in itself change the role of parents; however, parent choice (if it becomes widespread) may have sufficient impact to change the internal organization of both the schools chosen and the schools rejected.

Organization and at-risk students

Only the governors' study goes into depth about what needs to be done for students likely to be unsuccessful in school. A number of important initiatives are recommended, including: increased cooperation between schools, human services agencies and local businesses; early identification and intervention programs; more individualized and small group instruction and counseling during school years; and combination school/work programs to help keep older at-risk students in school after graduation.

Recommendations are made to extend the programs of the schools, e.g., preschools for disadvantaged young children; however, there is no recommendation in the material from the Task Force on Readiness which calls for or would imply any need for substantial change in the organization of the school or the school district.

Summary

To change the internal organization of the school district, the roles of the main actors on the local educational scene must be substantially changed.

- There is considerable interest in changing the role of the teacher: teachers should be given more autonomy; decisions about curriculum and other school matters should be made closer to the classroom; perhaps a committee of Lead Teachers should run the school.
- Except for one radical proposal calling for a school to be a "community of learners," there is little interest in changing the traditional role of the principal.
- In the study which examined the strengths and weaknesses of school boards, recommendations for "strengthening grass roots leadership" could be more easily accomplished if the structure of the school district were changed. Implementation of these recommendations would also result in significant changes in the role of the superintendent.
- Parents may find a new role developing as representatives on local school councils. Some strongly urge that parents be able to choose the school their children attend — this might force organizational change in chosen schools as well as in rejected schools.
- No recommendation is made which would structurally connect human services agencies or local businesses with the school district (with the view of better serving at-risk pupils).

The strongest statement calling for reorganizing the school comes, not from current reformers, but from our voice from the past. John Dewey in 1903 felt very strongly that all reforms are conditioned on first changing the character of the "school organization."

> All other reforms are conditioned upon reform in the quality and character of those who engage in the teaching profession...But as long as a school organization which is undemocratic in principle tends to repel from all but the higher portions of the school system those of independent force, of intellectual initiative, and of inventive ability, or tends to hamper them in their work after they find their way into the schoolroom, so long all other reforms are compromised at their source and postponed indefinitely for fruition.[15]

Challenge of Reorganizing the School District

There are at least three different ways to view the organization of the school district. In this paper, we are focusing on the *internal organization* of the school district. We are not concerned with the reorganization of small school districts into a larger regional school district. (This is frequently referred to as *school district reorganization.*) Nor are we dealing with whether the public schools are *fiscally independent* of the local municipality and can set their own tax rate, or whether the public schools are an integral part of the municipality and are considered to be *fiscally dependent* on city or town government.

Before considering a new model for the internal organization of the school district, let's set forth some background and a rationale for reorganization by considering:

1. Long-term Evolution of the School District
2. Structural Timbers of Present Organization
3. Pressures on Present Organization
4. Goals and Tools for Reorganization

1. Long-term Evolution of the School District

Anyone who would propose a new model school district organization must confront the reality of history. The present organizational form has been over 300 years in the making! Its roots can be traced back to early colonial times when a distinction was made between primary schools for some but not all children and secondary preparatory schools for a few select boys who would ultimately become the professionals of their day. The use of the property tax to support local governmental functions also started in colonial times.

The present September to mid-June school year is an extension of the pattern of school terms used when most Americans lived on farms and children were needed as labor during the planting and harvesting seasons.

With the growth of cities during the last half of the nineteenth century and with the need to educate growing numbers of immigrant children, the graded school was conceived and was widely adopted. Along with this, principals (principal teachers) and superintendents (the first superintendents were appointed in the 1830's) became necessary to administer larger schools and more numerous schools within larger towns and cities.

Education in this country has primarily been a local function operating under state law; however, federal participation is not new. In the early part of the last century, the Northwest Ordinance required that a portion of each section of federally owned land, when disposed of, be set aside for the support of public schools. The Morrill Act, intially passed in 1862, set up land-grant colleges. The institutions and programs established under this act and subsequent extensions of the act have been of considerable importance to public education in rural areas.

Vocational education has been supported directly by pass-through funding for well over a half century. Since World War II, the list of federally supported local efforts has lengthened.

Organizationally, federally funded programs have added an important dimension to local education. These programs, with the exception of revenue sharing, have always been categorical in nature. This has required local educators to specify objectives in a particular area of study for a described group of students. Thus, categorical funding has forced schools to move toward objective-oriented, more client-oriented curriculum.

Attempts to equalize educational opportunity and the push to establish junior high schools began shortly after the turn of the century. The idea of having a "kindergarten" for five-year-olds was developed in Germany about this time and when imported to this country added another "grade level" to the vertical structure of public schools. It should be noted that seven decades after being introduced into this country, kindergarten still does not exist in some states and is not mandatory in others. (And some states are now considering universal preschool!)

Middle schools had their debut in the 1950's. While they have found some acceptance, they remain only one of a number of ways to structure education for the in-between pupils ages eleven to fourteen.

The manner in which human knowledge is divided for purposes of educating the young and how these divisions have evolved is much too ambitious a task to undertake as part of this brief historical sketch of school district organization. Here are just two examples of how changes have been made in how knowledge is categorized for the purposes of schooling: "language arts" as a combining of reading, spelling, literature, composition, debate, and dramatics; "social studies" as a pulling together of parts of history, government, economics, civics, sociology, geography, and anthropology.

Difficulty of "changing things"

For social institutions such as education, government, and health care systems, forms and structures evolve slowly and, once in place, tend to persist and endure. Changing "the existing order of things" is risky business. Hark to the warning of Machiavelli about the difficulties faced by those who would introduce changes.

> And let it be noted that there is no more delicate matter to take in hand, nor more dangerous to conduct, nor more doubtful in its success, than to set up as a leader in the introduction of changes.
>
> For he who innovates will have for his enemies all those who are well off under the existing order of things, and only lukewarm supporters in those who might be better off under the new. This lukewarm temper arises partly from the fear of adversaries who have the laws [present organization] on their side, and partly from the incredulity of mankind, who will never admit the merit of anything new, until they have seen it proved by the event.
>
> The result, however, is that whenever the enemies of change make an attack, they do so with the zeal of partisans while the others defend themselves so feebly as to endanger both themselves and their cause...[16]

2. Structural Timbers of Present Organization

Webster's III defines three forms of the word *organization*:

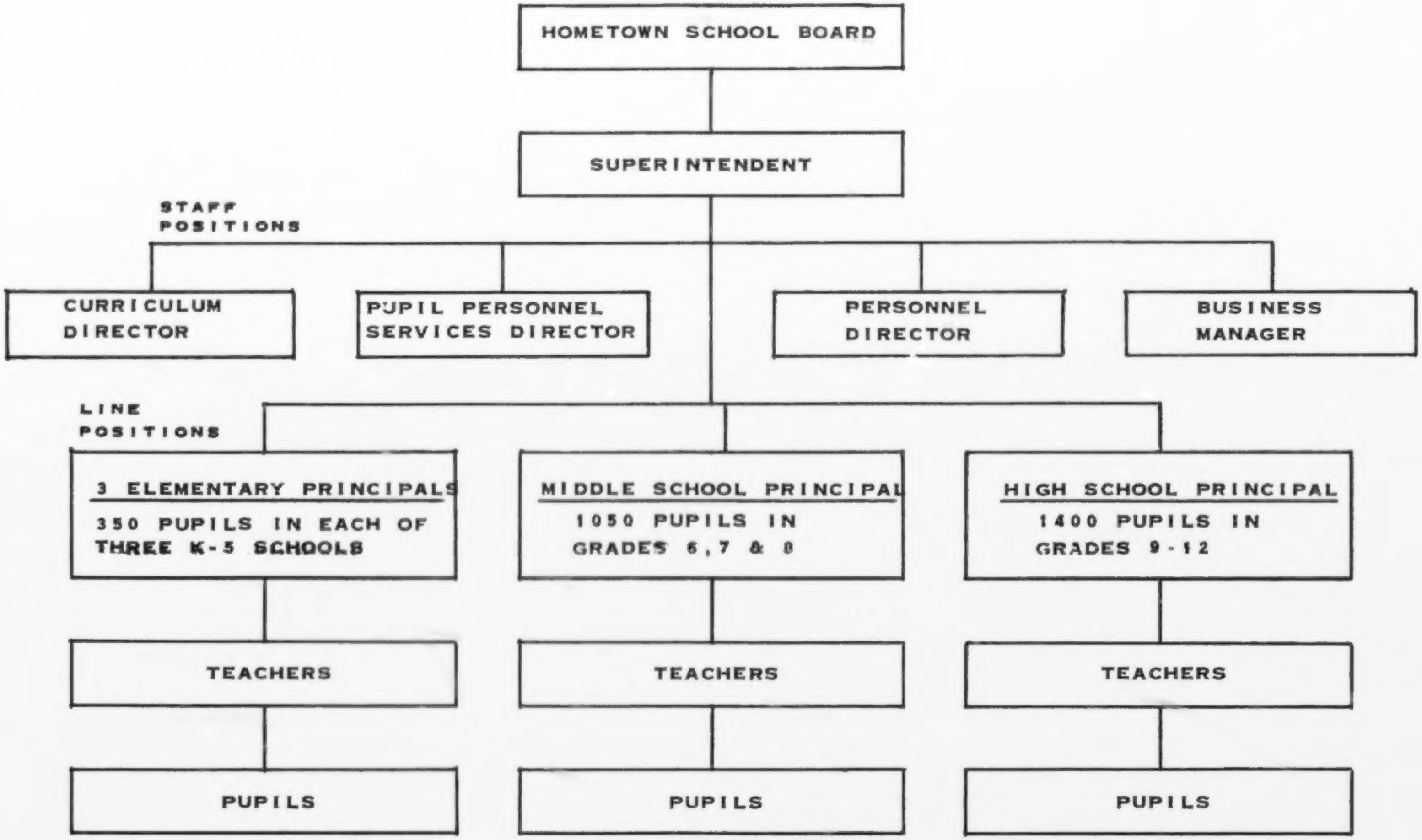
> *Organ*: A differentiated structure (as a heart, kidney, leaf, flower) made up of various cells and tissues and adapted for the performance of some specified function and grouped with other structures sharing a common function into systems.
>
> *Organic*: Constituting a whole whose parts are mutually dependent or intrinsically related; having systemic coordination.
>
> *Organization*: The administrative and functional structure of an organization (as a business, political party, military unit) including established relationships of personnel through lines of authority and responsibility with delegated and assigned duties.[17]

The specifics of organization of the American school district vary with size; however, all school districts regardless of size have some common features. For purposes of this paper, a "medium size school district," one with 350 pupils per grade and a total pupil population of 4,550 pupils, will be used as the example. Its organization is charted in Figure 1.

The characteristics, the "various cells and tissues," the "mutually dependent or intrinsically related parts which constitute the whole" of our example school district are:

- A school board which serves as the policy body (and sometimes the court). Members are elected for a specific number of years by the voters of the school district.
- A line and staff bureaucracy in which there is delegation of authority and assigning of responsibilities. Educators and support personnel fill specified roles; when a person leaves a position, another person is employed to fill the "slot."

Figure 1. Organizational Chart - Hometown Public Schools
A Typical Medium Size School District of 4550 Pupils


HOMETOWN SCHOOL BOARD
SUPERINTENDENT
STAFF POSITIONS
CURRICULUM DIRECTOR
PUPIL PERSONNEL SERVICES DIRECTOR
PERSONNEL DIRECTOR
BUSINESS MANAGER
LINE POSITIONS
3 ELEMENTARY PRINCIPALS
350 PUPILS IN EACH OF THREE K-5 SCHOOLS
MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL
1050 PUPILS IN GRADES 6,7 & 8
HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL
1400 PUPILS IN GRADES 9-12
TEACHERS
TEACHERS
TEACHERS
PUPILS
PUPILS
PUPILS

- A superintendent of schools who serves as executive officer for the school board and chief administrator of the school district.
- Persons in staff positions who are responsible to the superintendent or to a principal.
- Buildings, grounds, equipment, and supplies appropriate to content of curriculum and age of pupils.
- Principals who are in charge of buildings and educational programs for specific age levels of pupils.
- Teachers who are assigned to instructional responsibilities in specific grades and content and subject areas.
- Pupils, the receivers of instruction, who are assigned into age/grade classrooms. The typical pupil moves from one "class" to another during the course of a day and a week and moves one grade at a time from kindergarten to high school graduation in thirteen years.
- Content in kindergarten and lower grades organized by specific communication and number skills with content for older pupils divided into "subjects." The number of elective subjects tends to increase as pupils grow older.
- The "whole school system" funded almost entirely from tax sources which are received on a single year basis. The "system" is in full operation for all pupils from early September of one year until mid-June of the following year.
- Except for some monitoring and evaluation by the state and federal governments and an accreditation visit every ten years by the secondary school accrediting association team, all testing and evaluation efforts are carried out and controlled internally.

3. Pressures on Present Organization

Why is *now* — the late 1980's — the time when serious consideration should be given to restructuring the school district? Why not let the slow pace of evolution continue, allowing changes in society to gradually build up sufficient strength to force incremental changes in school district organization?

Now is the time simply because American society is in an era of exceedingly rapid change, with one change stumbling over another, and everything seemingly changing at the same time. The pace and intensity of change is so rapid that small, incremental changes in structure would be ineffective in meeting the emerging problems and pressures.

We could label the organization of the school district as being "worn out" or "bruised" because of the pressures caused by changes during the last forty years. We must be careful not to personalize the term "school district." The school district is *people*. While structure can be roughly charted and described on paper, structure is in the heads of *people*. *People* demonstrate what the organization is by their behavior, which is determined by what they perceive their roles to be — and, more importantly, by what they think others expect their roles to be.

Pressures, then, result because events and trends in the environment of the school district call for behaviors that are different from those educators have used with success in the past.

Let's look at the events and trends which have brought intense pressures on persons filling the traditional roles within the school organization. And again, organizational matters need to be viewed in a long-term context. We will use a time period of forty years as our temporal context — from the end of World War II to the present.

. . . . . .

Collective bargaining in the public sector. The emergence of collective bargaining in education forced a major change in the organization of the school district. With regard to compensation and conditions of work, teachers are no longer compelled to communicate their needs through the authority levels of the school district. Rather, they now deal collectively and directly with the school board. The superintendent, who used to view himself/herself as the leader of the local professional group in all important matters, now assumes the role of advisor and information provider to the school board and sits on the management side of the negotiating table.

There are hard questions as well as strongly held opinions about the impact of collective bargaining on public education. Has the profession of education been irretrievably split with the introduction of adversarial relationships? Or is public education better off than in a prior era, which was frequently marked by paternalism, favoritism and arbitrary decision making? Is the work day and the work week too unionized? Or are we better off with a more precise definition of work time and private time? Who "owns" the curriculum and who should participate in and have jurisdiction over changing and developing the curriculum?

Splintering of a workable consensus of values within the community. From the mid-1960's to the mid-1970's, American society passed through tumultuous period which forced us to reexamine our basic values. In the process we started doubting the efficacy of our social institutions. We had government which couldn't govern; our prisons seemed to be creating criminals; the state mental health hospitals dehumanized persons already emotionally ill; schools didn't seem to be teaching; and families had lost the ability to nourish.

Some of us even cast doubt on a fundamental American premise: that society would grow and prosper if we only let "reason" and "pragmatism" be our guides. When reason and pragmatism failed, some turned to drugs, Eastern religions, mysticism, and even to the occult to discover what was really true and important about life. Almost predictably, movements and pressures developed to recapture the traditional American values.

Is it the task of the school to help build a new concensus of values within the community? Can schools function well without a fairly wide agreement on basic values within the community? To what extent are alternative schools, alternative curriculum, and even alternative materials and lesson plans helpful in meeting the present schism or chaos of values? What can schools do to counter the present homogenization of text and reference books caused by pressures on publishers who need to satisfy "everybody" in order to have a nationwide market for their products?

Changes in the American family. The list of changes is a familiar one...both parents working because of choice or economic necessity...more divorces...confusion and hostility in raising of children...more single parent families...teenage pregnancies...more latchkey children...more poor children...more abused and neglected children.

Are serving breakfasts and offering extended day programs with us on a permanent basis? Will schools be asked to enter the infant and toddler daycare business? Has the TV screen become the new "hearth" of the American family? What impact does 25 to 35 hours of passive viewing have on pupils' capacity and desire to learn in school?

What role should the school assume toward families in which parents have lost control over their children? If the family becomes weaker, less nurturing and caring, will schools be required to furnish the controls and the emotional support formerly provided by the home? (Perhaps *home-room* will really become *home*-room.)

The *changing labor market*. Among the factors which underlie the rapid changes taking place in the American economy are: fierce competition from other countries which have cheap, plentiful, and increasingly more skilled workers; robotics and other technologies, the introduction of which decreases the need for human labor; thousands of farmers choosing to or being forced to leave the field of agriculture. And as already noted, it is the fear of America losing its competitive edge that has been the prime motivating factor behind the current education reform movement.

But can schools really do anything about the change in the number and nature of jobs? Are not most of the causal factors well beyond the control of people responsible for the quality of public education? Other than adding electronics, robotics, and computer literacy and technology as courses, what can be done to change vocational education? Can schools be flexible enough to stop training students for jobs which may not exist in five years?

Should the public schools be held responsible for what seemingly are past sins, such as: The large number of adult illiterates who are at increasing disadvantage in the volatile labor market? The negative attitudes many workers have toward work — which might be one factor which undermines the productivity of whole industries? Should *adult education* and *continuing education* become a more integral part of an all inclusive educational system based on the need for lifelong learning in vocational as well as other areas of life?

Growing sense of world community. Forming and continuing existence of the United Nations...Rapid international transportation and instant worldwide communications...Exploration of the moon and the planets...The increasing psychological awareness of Planet Earth by having the experience of viewing the world from space...The threat of a catastrophic nuclear war...The increasing realization that major environmental problems cross national boundaries and require multi-national solutions.

How do the public schools educate the "American citizen" who must also be a "world citizen?" Do we need more curricula like K-12 Global Education?

Changing structure of knowledge and research. "Knowledge" now doubles in three years — it used to take a decade! The problems as well as the opportunities now facing mankind — whether these be building space stations, protecting the environment, preventing nuclear war, altering human genes, devising a world financial structure, discovering the origin and destiny of the universe, or stopping the AIDS epidemic — are systemic in nature and cannot be dealt with within a single sphere of knowlege or traditional discipline.

Modern problems are inter-disciplinary or cross-disciplinary. "Double-name" fields abound: psychobiology, biophysics, astrophysics, biochemistry, sociobiology, etc. Of particular interest to educators are the scholars in neuroanatomy, neurobiology, neurolinguistics, neuropsychology, and neurosurgery who are discovering new knowledge about the structure and functioning of the human brain. At the heart of this proliferation and reclassification of knowledge are the instruments making it all possible: the electron microscope, the high energy particle accelerator, more powerful visual and radio telescopes, and increasingly sophisticated and more widely available computers — just to name four.

How can educators and students deal with this ever increasing sheer bulk of human knowledge? Do we educate pupils to be primarily process oriented, information gatherers and sorters, and lifelong searchers after truth? Are there new sets of fundamental facts, skills, and attitudes? Should not the whole K-12 curriculum be reexamined and perhaps be divided into new and more functional categories? Will new knowledge about the brain bring about a whole new synthesis in the field of psychology? How can teachers keep up with and apply new information about perception, attention, memory, and learning styles to daily lesson plans?

And there are yet other events and trends which have put pressures on persons filling the traditional roles of teacher, counselor, principal, superintendent and school board member...The decrease in the percentage of families with children in school and the larger portion of the population on fixed incomes are two of a number of factors which have made tax caps politically popular...The increasing number of non-English speaking pupils from families with different cultures and values has posed a challenge for many school districts...The "drug problem," the "discipline problem," the "not-interested-in-learning problem," the "truancy problem," and the "dropout problem" — all part of the problem side of many American secondary schools...Declining enrollment brought about significant reductions in staff in some parts of the country. Among the results of this trend was the loss to education of many of the youngest and most recently prepared professionals.

. . . . . .

These have been among the main trends and events of the past four decades which have made an impact on or have created serious challenges on the school district organization — the "school district organization" being defined as the people filling the major roles in local school districts.

4. Goals and Tools for Reorganization

One must have reasons for wanting to change the structure of one of the community's basic institutions, the school district. In addition, tools and strategies must be present in the culture which would make it possible for a new form of school district to be conceptualized.

Goals for reorganization

Goals for reorganization are simply purposes and organizational features which would be difficult to bring about within the current structure. The following goals would be applicable to any new model of a school district, not just one based on education by charter within a ten-year plan. Given the problems, conditions, and opportunities of the 1990's, a school board and educational staff should be able to accomplish the following twelve goals within the framework of a reorganized school district.

1. Give teachers responsibility for and control over instruction.
2. Insure that pupils assume responsibility for their own learning and behavior and that they acquire the attitudes and skills to become lifelong learners.
3. Link career development plans and professional growth activities to the instructional materials, curriculum and services needs of the school district.
4. Move the school district from a ten-month, rural-based school year to a 210+ day school year for students and a full-time, twelve-month work year for teachers.
5. Provide opportunities for teachers to undertake professional-level, non-classroom responsibilities as part of their careers.
6. Establish a program budgeting/accounting system which will enable educational programs to be planned and implemented over a three-to-five-year period of time.
7. Enable principals to revitalize their leadership roles as creators of safe, positive environments for learning and supporters of teachers who are responsible for instruction.
8. Establish a program/services monitoring and evaluation system *not* under the control of those whose programs and services are being monitored and evaluated.
9. Productively tap and cope with the vast expansion and fundamental changes taking place within and across the fields and disciplines of knowledge.
10. Make wide and appropriate applications of the computer and other emerging developments in technology and communications.
11. Integrate various levels of educational research and professional contributions into the "fabric" of the school district.
12. Solicit and encourage the active participation of parents and persons from business and other vocations in the education of the children and youth of the community.

Tools for reorganization

Tools for restructuring a social institution cannot be created out of thin air. The means for restructuring are themselves artifacts which have had to be invented and developed within the culture in order to be available for use.

Let's use the last five decades — from World War II until the present — as the time period. What new tools have emerged during these fifty years to help us to better understand human personality and how individuals relate to groups and organizations? What new ways now exist for creating, storing, and accessing knowledge?

Several organizing tools originated during World War II. "Long-term planning" was given considerable impetus by the need for "battle plans." By necessity, we learned the know-how of conceiving, capturing on paper, and implementing complex sets of plans which coordinated the functions of planes, ships, underwater demolition teams, and amphibious troops for operations such as the invasion of various islands in the Pacific during World War II. The navy developed a planning tool, "PERT," which cut many months off the time needed to design and build a ship. This tool has been successfully used in reducing the time it takes to plan and build a school.

In the 1950's, "Educational Sociology" first appeared in graduate catalogs of schools of education. Concepts from cultural anthropology applied to education formed part of the rationale for this course. The school could be viewed as a subculture within the community — a subculture very different from the subculture of a church, a factory, a store, or the local Rotary Club. Other content in this field focused on identifying power groups in the community and distinguishing between the *formal power structure* of the community ("the way things are supposed to be") and the *informal power structure* ("the way things really are").

Increased categorical support from the federal government provided educators in practically all American school districts with experience in planning and operating funded projects. For the first time, educators became proposal writers and, to obtain needed financing, were forced to target needs of specific groups of students and to state doable objectives. Often evaluation plans had to be in place prior to the approval of funding. "How to Write Performance Objectives" as well as other topics related to securing allocated and discretionary monies were popular topics in workshops held throughout the country.

Entire areas of study and research focusing on the productivity and behavior of the individual in the organization have been conceptualized. "Organizational Development" ("OD") is one such new area. We know a great deal more about how change and innovation can be fostered or thwarted by "the establishment." A step-by-step formula can be used by a school district if it desires to replicate a program or service that was successfully developed and implemented elsewhere.

We now know more about human personality and how the individual psyche relates to family, group, and organization. The following did not exist prior to 1945: Maslow's hierarchy of needs; intense, confrontational workshops for leaders and group facilitators; ways to identify learning styles of pupils and teaching styles of teachers; insights from the neurosciences that turf and psychological ownership issues originate in our deep, primitive brain — and this list could go on and on.

Visit any large bookstore and you are sure to find a complete section of books and material on "Career Development." And in the field of education in particular, we have the know-how of maintaining and upgrading the knowledge and skills of personnel. Many school districts now have or are working toward quality inservice education programs based on both individual and curriculum needs. And there is solid research to fall back on as to what will work and what will not work.

"Systems thinking" has emerged during these fifty years. Virtually every school district has had to organize and operate "client-oriented educational programs:" first, for children from economically and culturally disadvantaged families; next for handicapped children; and then for other target populations such as high-risk students who are potential school dropouts. Needless to say, grafting client-oriented program structures on to the traditional school bureaucracy has caused considerable "organizational stress."

Many school districts now use PPBS, Program Planning Budgeting System. PPBS on computer gives the school district the capability of extending the financial structure beyond a single year even though revenue is received annually and some major expenditures such as future salaries may not be known exactly.

It is difficult to measure the impact and importance of the availability to school districts of increasingly more powerful, small computers. Using the new superchip, one company is seeking to develop a computer and software which can model the birth and life of galaxies. The Encyclopedia Britannica is already on disc and the time is not too far distant when the entire Library of Congress can be accessed by a seventh grader sitting at a desk in the local junior high school. The computer is not only a tool to assist in restructuring the school district but also a reason why the local school district needs to be restructured.

. . . . .

Reorganizing the school district will indeed be a challenge. Its evolution has been long-term with major organizational changes occurring decades apart.

There are heavy pressures on the present "structural timbers" of the school district. The emerging context for education in the "Information Age" requires new behaviors which conflict with or are outside of the responsibilities of those now in the major roles in local schools.

Out of the present problems and stresses can be drawn "goals" or criteria for any proposed new model of the school district. And we have, over the past fifty years, invented tools and strategies which now make restructuring the school district possible.

Nor does anyone pour new wine into old bottles.
If he does, the wine will pour out and the bottles
will be ruined. New wine should be poured
into fresh bottles.

— Jesus of Nazareth

Education by Charter: Restructuring School Districts

23 Event 1. Resignation of Horace Dodd, Superintendent of the Hometown Public Schools.

25 Event 2. Presentation of Dr. William Wright, applicant for the position of Superintendent, Hometown Public Schools.

29 Event 3. Dr. Wright's session with the Executive Committee and Building Representatives of the Hometown Teachers Association.

33 Event 4. Explanation of "Education by Charter" by the new superintendent, Dr. Bill Wright, at the opening pre-school meeting for the total staff of the Hometown Public Schools.

51 Event 5. Request for Charter Planning Funds by the Primary Teachers of the Brookside Elementary School.

55 Event 6. Report of Elementary and Middle School Mathematics and Science Teachers on the Use of Planning Funds.

57 Event 7. Request for Educational Charter for Humanities Program for High School Juniors and Seniors.

61 Event 8. Establishing Study Group on Longer School Year and New K-12 Functions.

59 Event 9. Recommendation for Reorganized K-12 Functions and New "Septuple School/Work Year".

89 Event 10. Bill Wright reminisces about the past ten years and starts thinking about his future.

And now let's slip into the shoes of Dr. William Wright, applicant for superintendent of our example school district, the Hometown Public Schools. Dr. Wright will use many of the tools for reorganization in restructuring the Hometown Public Schools over a ten-year period, starting in 1989 and ending in 1999.

The first of ten "events" is the resignation of the current superintendent of the Hometown schools, Mr. Horace Dodd. . .

Event 1.

Resignation of Horace Dodd, Superintendent of the Hometown Public Schools.

Scene.

The October, 1988 school board meeting in the high school library. The board is ready for its next agenda item, "5. Statement by superintendent" under New Business. Chairperson Marilyn O'Keefe has called on Superintendent Horace Dodd.

I've asked Ms. O'Keefe for about five minutes on the agenda this evening.

As you know, I'm starting my eighteenth year as superintendent of the Hometown Public Schools. It's been a good eighteen years — oh we've had some rough years but also quite a number of really good years.

It occurred to me while I was fishing at Squam Lake last summer that we're now educating children and young people who will be spending most or almost all of their adult lives in the 21st century...This town is changing...This country is changing...The world is changing...And we as citizens and educators have to figure out ways to keep up with all this.

I appreciate your offer of another three-year contract. But I'll be hitting my 61st birthday in February and I'm starting to think about doing some traveling, perhaps teaching another course at State University. Might even try to do some writing.

From the school district's point of view, I really think it's time for you to have a new person as superintendent. That person can come in with a fresh vision of what the Hometown Public Schools should be or become in the next five or ten years. A new person would be more able to help you and the staff to adjust to all these changes that are taking place.

I weighed the option of breaking this news now or waiting until about March. October may seem a bit early — it makes me a "lame duck" for over eight months. On the other hand, it gives you a comfortable amount of time to initiate and carry out the search process for a new superintendent.

Many thanks for the solid support you've given me over the years. I will be resigning effective June 30, 1989 and will incorporate my letter of resignation into the package for the agenda of the November meeting.

Event 2.

Presentation of Dr. William Wright, applicant for the position of Superintendent, Hometown Public Schools.

Scene.

Wednesday evening, March 9, 1988 in the high school auditorium. Dr. Wright is one of five finalists who have been invited to make twenty-minute presentations to a regular meeting of the school board. The meeting has been moved from the library to the auditorium to accommodate the large number of teachers, other school staff, and townspeople who have turned out for the meeting.

Thank you, Ms. O'Keefe. I am very pleased to be able to share my ideas about education with the school board and staff of the Hometown schools and the parents and other citizens of the community.

I believe that our greatest resource for improving our schools lies in the untapped, unused capabilities of people...

- Like the vast reserve of energy and learning power within bored and unstimulated pupils.
- Like the richness and creativity inside the heads and hearts of teachers locked into an outdated curriculum, using bland, pablum textbooks — locked into an instructional system which they had no part in making and which they have no power to change.
- Like the communication and group process skills of principals which are poorly used because they are saddled with the impossible, know-it-all, generalized role of "educational leader."
- Like the unfulfilled aspirations of parents who stand outside the system and who see the initial enthusiasm of their children turn to "Ugh — school!" as the weight of "schooling" takes its effect.
- Like the dried up energy of a librarian with a vision of connecting books, materials, and computer data banks with learning experiences having to settle for "teaching the kids how to use the library."

We are in a new age. Our society has gone through the agricultural and industrial revolutions and now we're in the age of services and information. What an exciting time to be a part of the educational scene — whether it be as student, teacher, principal, specialist, parent or citizen. With knowledge doubling every three years and disciplines and fields of study and research being restructured, the opportunity for the Hometown Public Schools to make a quantum leap forward in improving the quality of our enterprise is waiting to be seized.

There are some serious questions to address: Can we educate pupils in such a way that they not only learn how to learn in school but also develop skills and attitudes to become lifelong learners? Can we devise an organizational structure which will give teachers full responsibility for the function of instruction? How can principals take the lead in creating and maintaining a positive climate for learning in our schools? Can we more directly connect career development and professional growth activities with the curriculum and program needs of the school? How can we support teams of teachers and specialists in developing challenging learning materials to replace the "common denominator, bland, pablum" quality textbooks foisted on us by commercial publishers? Are there ways to make parents both clients and participants in the education of their children? Can we extend the walls of the classroom to include the rich resources of the community and region in which we are located?

I believe there are positive ways to answer these questions, but we have to be willing to change the way we organize our effort and our resources. Most importantly we have to escape the prison of the 10-month, rural-based school year. Major problems are seldom solved nor can serious planning for improvement be done within a 10-month period of time or with a 10-month mentality. We've got to start thinking more long range.

Now and for the past century, school "starts" around Labor Day. Everybody is fresh for the new school year. We seem to go uphill until about Thanksgiving.

Then the holiday spirit sets in. Somehow we survive the winter doldrums of January and February. After that it's all downhill and we start losing it all about May 15 when the seniors start leaving. By that time the rest of us are leaving psychologically — eager to embrace what the summer will bring us.

Solutions to the serious problems we face do not fit within a ten-month year. Nor do the opportunities for building curriculum or growing professionally. A much longer, connected period of time is needed. And if organizational restructuring is called for, we're talking about a five-to-ten-year period of time.

I would propose of a ten-year plan — a decade plan — to help us productively solve the problems we face and seize the opportunities which are available to us. The timeframe I propose would start July 1, 1989 and end June 30, 1999. Here is my "Decade Plan for School Improvement for the Hometown Public Schools."

- *Year 1, 1989-1990.* Encourage up to three pilot teams of teachers to develop three-to-five-year plans for the school board to approve. These plans — I call them "Educational Charters" — would include items such as: rationale and scope of their teaching and curriculum; description of the developmental and learning needs of their pupils; strategies for helping pupils acquire lifelong learning skills; how career plans and professional growth activities are linked with curriculum and program needs; materials, media to be used (including computer applications); and the manner in which inside/outside program evaluation will take place.

- *Years 2 and 3, 1990-1991 and 1991-1992.* Depending on when the applications for charters are completed and approved, the pilot teams would go into the first of their three to five-year plans. One team might be ready by the start of school in 1990; the others might not be ready until the following year.
- *Year 4, 1992-1993.* Presuming that the pilot teams were being successful and that there were an increasing number of teams of teachers wanting to develop charters, I would see the need for an intensive institute-workshop to address needs such as: How does the school board change its pattern of operation so that it can spend an increasing amount of time on curriculum matters? How should the ever-expanding amount of knowledge be categorized for school purposes? What K-12 functions should be institutionalized to support educational charters during their planning and

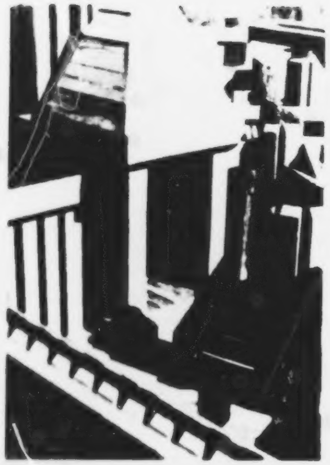
operational stages? Participants in this institute/workshop would include: school board; professional staff; parents, community resource persons, and others who have helped in starting Education by Charters; representatives from the secondary schools/colleges accrediting agency; and selected experts depending on the questions to be addressed. (State "school improvement funds" could be tapped to cover the cost of such an institute/workshop.)

- *Year 5, 1993-1994.* Under the school district curriculum structure worked out at the institute/workshop, additional teams of teachers would be encouraged to apply for charters. Detailed plans for new K-12 functions (including budget amounts) would be developed so that these functions would become operational July 1, 1994.
- *Year 6, 1994-1995.* The newly designed functions to support educational charters would be implemented. The early charters would be expiring and teams would have to decide whether to let the charter terminate or to apply for a new or revised charter. It is hoped that by the end of this school year 75% of education in Hometown would be conducted under educational charters.
- *Years 7, 8, and 9, July 1, 1995 through June 30, 1998.* The new organization for the Hometown Public Schools (based on Education by Charter) would now be in full operation. During Year 8, the Hometown High School would host its ten-year accreditation visitation team. The accrediting agency will have already approved the reorganization of the curriculum of the high school. The high school will be evaluated on the basis of its performance within the new curriculum structure.
- *Year 10, 1998-1999.* A second intensive institute/workshop would be held to evaluate the impact of the reorganization of the school district. Out of this evaluation would come the seeds and shape of the second decade plan for the Hometown Public Schools. The second decade plan would start on July 1, 1999 and end June 30, 2009.

Well, that's my vision for the public schools of Hometown for the next ten years. Obviously, under this reorganization, the superintendent (and others) will be taking on some different responsibilities. Today's superintendent needs to be a planner as well as a teacher of planning. Please note on my resume that, in addition to being a member of the ASCD and the AASA, I am active in the American Planning Association and the American Society for Training and Development.

There is yet another dimension of thinking in decade terms. Ten years is probably as long as anyone should stay on as a superintendent in the same community. By the end of ten years, a superintendent would probably have contributed all that he/she is able to contribute in one setting. Looking at it the other way, after ten years a superintendent would be boxed in by knowing pretty much what is expected of him/her in various situations. How creative would the superintendent be the second time around? How original would his/her vision be in developing and conceptualizing that second decade plan? I think the school district would be ready for a new person as its educational leader.

I see my twenty minutes are up. I will pleased to answer any questions. . .



41

42

Event 3.

Dr. Wright's session with the Executive Committee and Building Representatives of the Hometown Teachers Association.

Scene.

Time and place: 3:30pm, Wednesday April 13, 1988 in the high school library. It's common knowledge (1) that the school board favors Dr. Wright over the other four finalists and (2) that Wr. Wright is in the final stages of application for three other superintendencies in the state. Dr. Wright requested this meeting with the teachers association prior to the time the board would be making the final decision.

I appreciate this opportunity to talk with the Executive Committee and Building Representatives of the Hometown Teachers Association.

Along with the four other finalists, I have visited your schools and I've talked with you individually and as building faculties — and I've drunk your coffee — I counted at least 45 cups!

It is rather extraordinary for an applicant to request an extra step in the search process. But I have proposed some rather fundamental changes in how we should organize ourselves to provide education for the children and youth of this community. Very few of these changes can happen unless you as teachers and I as a new superintendent have some common ground right from the start.

Teachers responsible for instruction

The time has come for teachers, both individually and in what I call "charter teams," to accept full responsibility for the function of instruction. I would do this by having teachers receive three-to-five-year mandates (and funds) for instruction directly from the school board — with no one between the teachers and the school board, not me as superintendent, nor your principal, nor a K-12 curriculum director. And obviously this is going to change all our roles in the school district — the boxes on the organizational chart will be moving around a bit!

A superintendent, principal, or curriculum director could be a participant on charter teams providing they taught on a regular basis in the area of their expertise.

I am aware that there are studies which show that teachers vary considerably in their desire to build and control the curriculum they teach. Some are chafing under the "what's there" that was put "there" by somebody else, perhaps a K-12 curriculum director with token input from the teachers. Other teachers could care less — they simply want to teach what's expected and not have to worry about updating or revitalizing the knowledge base they are drawing on for their lesson plans.

Along with teachers having full responsibility for instruction, we would need to set up specific program evaluation plans which would have an outside force or component built into them. I really don't see any problem here — after all we seldom let students who are responsible for their learning evaluate their own work (perhaps we should). I believe an inside-outside program evaluation plan can be worked out which would be satisfactory to both the teachers association and the school board.

Teaching needs to be a full-time job

Teaching should be a full-time, full-year professional job. And I think we can achieve this goal in Hometown in the next five to ten years.

The changes I am proposing will take many, many hours of planning and work. Many of these hours will be in addition to and outside the work day and work year in your collective bargaining agreement. And I don't believe good thinking and productive work happen after a full school day. Parents and others from the community including professors from State University should be participants with you on charter teams. Teams might meet evenings, Saturday mornings, as well as during vacation and summer periods.

Integrating career development and school needs

Individual career development and professional growth activities need to tie much more directly with the curriculum development and program needs of educational charters. I don't think we realize the degree of deterioration of lessons which has occurred because of our over-reliance on commercially produced textbooks and classroom materials. We've got the brains and the know-how to do much better than this. But this kind of preparation for instruction takes a great deal of time that is not now given teachers — lots of individual time and lots of group time.

Teachers need support services

We haven't done very well in schools in providing secretarial and clerical help for teachers. With word processing now a part of the support scene, with appropriate use of work-study high school students, and with a larger number of secretaries and clerks, I think we can go a long way in making it possible for teachers to devote practically all of their time to higher level professional instruction tasks than typing, recording and running off and collating classroom materials.

Recruitment and selection of teachers

Let me touch on another area of common concern before coming back to a beginning step for working toward a full professional year for all educators.

What happens when a teacher retires or moves to another state at the end of the second year of a five year charter? I would see charter team members taking a great deal of responsibility in terms of the manner in which that teacher's services are replaced. Remember, each educational charter is on its own multi-year budget. Let's say that the teacher who is leaving is making $32,000 per year. If all the other teachers on the charter team are experienced, a beginning teacher might be employed for $22,000. This leaves a resource of $30,000 of resources which could be used by the team for other purposes over the remaining three years of the charter.

Or perhaps there is a period of unforeseen declining enrollment and the teacher would not need to be replaced. This will provide $96,000 of resources for the remaining three years of the charter. (I'm sure the school board would want to do some negotiating with the the charter team on the use of so large an amount of money!)

In addition to teachers having some real say over resources allocated to them, I would want charter team members to play important roles in selecting replacements and hiring additional staff.

Common hourly amount for extra time

Let's get back to the extra-time, extra-pay issue. In a preliminary discussion with the school board about a possible contract for me, I proposed that the equivalent of one month of my twelve-month contract be considered as "planning time" and that for that month I would be paid at the same rate as any other professional in the district who was putting in time on curriculum and program development and professional growth activities — such time being outside the regular work day and work year.

To figure this common rate, I took the 186-day work year, 8-hour work day, and $24,000 salary figure and came up with about $16 per hour for next year. I realize that $24,000 is at the lower end of the salary schedule, but this formula provides much more than the $10 per hour now being paid to teachers for working extra time.

Here are several examples of how this would work: where the content of a 45-contact hour graduate course is needed by a charter team, a teacher would be paid $720 plus tuition; for a two and a half hour charter team evening session, each teacher would receive $40; for five four-hour mornings of curriculum work in the summer, each participating teacher would receive $320.

You can see that, as increasing numbers of teachers become involved in planning and implementing educational charters, this will become a sizeable addition to the school budget. I've gone into this in considerable detail with the school board and they know where I stand on this. And they also are aware of how this could eventually make possible a full-time professional year for teachers — as well as a longer, restructured school year for pupils.

I think I have talked enough for now. Are there any questions?

There were many questions — some very pointed ones. Dr. Wright handled the questions in a very direct manner. He reminded the teachers that the calls for "school improvement" were, in a very real sense, warnings which neither teachers, administrators nor the school board could ignore.

Well, thank you for the spirited response. The business of reorganizing a school district is a formidable challenge. After all, some of its timbers have been in place for several centuries. A new organization of school district will not be in place by Christmas or even two or three Christmas's from now.

You haven't been able to ask all of your questions and I certainly don't have all the answers. If there is some measure of common ground on which teachers, administrators, and school board of Hometown can stand at the start, I think we could have an exciting time during the 1990's.

If appointed, I would be going into considerable detail about the origin of charters and their application to education at a pre-school staff meeting in late August. I would be looking for two or three teams of teachers to start planning their charters next year with the thought of starting to teach under the charters in September, 1989 or later in that school year.

I understand that you have a time scheduled to share your perceptions of this meeting with the school board. Thank you for meeting with me this afternoon.

Event 4.

Explanation of "Education by Charter" by the new superintendent, Dr. Bill Wright, at the opening pre-school staff meeting of the Hometown Public Schools.

Scene.

Following a joint meeting of the Executive Committee of the teachers association and members of the school board in late April, Dr. Wright was appointed superintendent and given a three-year roll-over contract. During the late spring and early summer, Dr. Wright met with central office staff, spent a great deal of time with the principals, and participated in an intensive three-week institute cosponsored by the American Planning Association and the American Society for Training and Development.

Now it's 9:00 am, Wednesday, August 31, 1988. The staff of the Hometown Public Schools is meeting in the high school auditorium to hear an address by their new superintendent.

Welcome to a *new* school year. It is a *new* school year in a number of ways: new for me as your superintendent; new for you in having to acclimate yourself to another person's way of looking at and doing things; and it's new for all of us as we prepare ourselves for educating children and youth in the last decade of this century.

You've heard me talk a lot about creating a school district in which teachers are given full responsibility for the function of instruction. And I've suggested a concept of "Education by Charter" as a way of doing this. Let me explain the connection between giving teachers responsibility for instruction and Education by Charter by answering three questions:

1. What is the origin and meaning of the term *charter*?
2. How can the concept of charter or chartering be applied to education?
3. How might we as a school district move toward "Education by Charter?"

1. What is the origin and meaning of the term *charter*?

The idea of a charter being a "written agreement" goes back over a thousand years. The agreement between King John and the English barons which was signed at Runnymede on June 15, 1215 was called the "Magna Carta" or "Great Charter."

Definition 2a in Webster's III defines charter as "an instrument in writing from the sovereign power of a...country granting or guaranteeing rights, franchises, or privileges."[21]

Let's look at one charter that was used during the Age of Exploration in the early seventeenth century.

The time: 1609. *The place:* The office of the Directors of the East India Company, Amsterdam, Holland. *The occasion:* The signing of a contract or *charter* between the East India Company and one Henry Hudson.

I'll put a transparency (Figure 2) on the screen which gives us the text of that charter. . .Take a few minutes to read it. The "legalese" isn't any worse than what we use today in our legal documents!

After a few minutes pause, Dr. Wright continued.

2. How can the concept of charter or chartering be applied to education?

In Definition 3 of charter, Webster's III gives us our starting point in applying the concept of charter to education: "An instrument in writing from the constituted authorities of an order...creating a local unit and defining its powers."[23]

Now let's dissect this charter and see how we might apply its elements to education.

1. First of all, there is a *grantor* — a person or group in authority. In this charter, the grantor was the East India Company. In a school district, the grantor would be the duly elected school board of the community.

2. The charter was granted to the *grantee — someone with a vision or a plan.* Henry Hudson's vision: "that there must in the northern parts a passage corresponding to the one found by Magellan near the South Pole." In a school district, the grantees would be teams of teachers with visions of how to construct and implement more relevant educational programs or how to revitalize programs that have endured the test of time. Note, that a charter was granted directly to the person or persons responsible for planning and carrying out the vision.

3. The charter usually called for *exploration into unknown territory and involved a degree of risk to the persons undertaking the exploration.* One clause in the charter covers the possible event of Henry Hudson perishing in this venture: ". . .and, in case (which God prevent) he do not come back or arrive hereabouts within a year, the Directors shall further pay to his wife two hundred guilders in cash..." There's a lot of unknown territory in the field of education. People with a vision of a better school — and especially those willing to change their roles and relationships within their schools — will be leaving the safe ground of present practice and traditional structure. "Education by Charter" is a vehicle for us to use to launch into the future and this cannot be done without taking some risks.

4. A charter implied both *the idea of a franchise and the idea of competition.* The charter implied the idea of a franchise in that the East India Company would not be sending another explorer out with the same charge as they were giving Henry Hudson. The situation was competitive in the sense that the East India Company was anxious to sign a charter with Hendry Hudson in order to woo him away from others who would have liked to have had his services. The kings and official trading companies were in keen competition for the resources which lay to the west.

If ninth and tenth-grade English teachers applied to the school board for a charter — and there were no options to their required classes — the school board in approving their request for a charter would be giving these teachers a franchise.

But let's suppose that there were two groups of primary teachers each with a totally different way of teaching beginning reading. Why mix these contentious forces in the same elementary school? The board in this case might issue *three* distinct

Figure 2. Charter between Henry Hudson and the Directors of the East India Company

(OVERHEAD TRANSPARENCY)

On this eighth of January in the year of our Lord one thousand six hundred and nine, the Directors of the East India Company of the Chamber of Amsterdam of the ten years reckoning of the one part, and Mr. Henry Hudson, Englishman, assisted by Jodocus Hondius, of the other part, have agreed in the manner following, to wit:

- That the said Directors shall in the first place equip a small vessel or yacht of about thirty lasts burden, with which, well provided with men, provisions, and other necessaries, the above named Hudson shall about the first of April, sail, in order to search for a passage by the North, around by the North side of Nova Zembla, and shall continue thus along that parallel until he shall be able to sail Southward to the latitude of sixty degrees.

- He shall obtain as much knowledge of the lands as can be done without any considerable loss of time, and if it is possible, return immediately in order to make a faithful report and relation of his voyage to the Directors, and to deliver over his journals, log-books, and charts, together with an account of everything whatsoever which shall happen to him during the voyage without keeping anything back; for which said voyage the Directors shall pay to the said Hudson, as well as for his outfit for the said voyage, as for the support of his wife and children, the sum of eight hundred guilders;

- and, in case (which God prevent) he do not come back or arrive hereabouts within a year, the Directors shall further pay to his wife two hundred guilders in cash; and thereupon they shall not be further liable to him or his heirs, unless he shall either afterwards or within the year arrive and have found the passage good and suitable for the Company to use; in which case the Directors will reward the before-named Hudson for his dangers, trouble and knowledge in their discretion, with which the before-mentioned Hudson is content.

- And in case the Directors think proper to prosecute and continue the same voyage, it is stipulated and agreed with the before-named Hudson, that he shall make his residence in this country with his wife and children and shall enter into the employment of no one other than the Company and this at the discretion of the Directors, who also promise to make him satisfied and content for such further service in all justice and equity. All without fraud or evil intent.

In witness of the truth, two contracts are made hereof of the same tenor and are subscribed by both parties and also by Jodocus Hondius, as interpreter and witness. Dated as above, (signed) Dirk Van Os, J. Poppe, Henry Hudson, (lower down signed) Jodocus Hondius, witness.

and different charters: one to a team advocating a total language growth approach; a second charter to a team dedicated to emphasizing a logically sequenced phonics program; and a third charter to a team of eclectic teachers who would draw freely from all approaches. Parents who desired a reading program other than the one in their neighborhood school could choose to send their child to the school with the program of their choice. This would be an example of using Education by Charter to foster competition.

5. The grantor of the charter *provided the supplies and resources for the enterprise*. Henry Hudson was given a "small vessel or yacht of about thirty lasts burden" which was to be "well provided with men, provisions and other necessaries." Through a multi-year, computer-based purchasing system, teachers in charter teams would be given the supplies and materials they themselves have chosen to facilitate instruction. Secretarial and clerical support for teachers would be a "resource" provided to charter teams. Obviously, the "small vessel or yacht" equates with appropriate furniture and classroom space. The term "well provided with men" implies a trained or trainable crew and would be analagous to a qualified teaching staff.

6. The charter contained within it *specific directions for the grantee and a definite length of time for him to complete the activity*. Henry Hudson was to sail on April 1st "in order to search for a passage by the North, around by the North side of Nova Zembla, and shall continue thus along that parallel until he shall be able to sail Southward to the latitude of 60 degrees. He shall obtain as much knowledge of the land as can be done without any considerable loss of time, and if it is possible return *immediately*..."

To obtain approval, a charter planning team would have to set forth its philosophy, methodology, the manner in which it would help pupils acquire lifelong learning attitudes and skills, and the learning needs of specific groups and numbers of students. In addition, as with Henry Hudson, each charter would have a beginning date and an ending date at which time the charter would cease to exist or would have to be renewed for another three-to-five-year period.

7. The charter spelled out in detail *the pay or rewards for the explorer*. In Henry Hudson's case, "the Directors shall pay to the said Hudson, as well as for his outfit for the said voyage, as for the support of his wife and children, the sum of eight hundred guilders..."

In addition to regular salaries and extra stipends for planning and inservice time, I would see a number of important rewards materializing for "teacher explorers." I think that Education by Charter can be the catalyst which will help us turn the corner in making teaching into a full-time, full-year profession. And the intangible rewards would be just as important — such as the excitement of bringing the cutting edge of the fields of knowledge and research right into the classroom.

8. The charter provided a means for the explorer *to be accountable to the grantor for results in a very specific way*. Henry Hudson was "to make a faithful report in relation of his voyage to the Directors, and to deliver over his journals, log-books and charts, together with an account of everything whatsoever which shall happen to him during the voyage without keeping anything back..."

Any program evaluation or accountability system controlled by those being evaluated or being held accountable is simply not creditable. There are a number of ways to put "outside forces" into program evaluation. But to work, there must also be understanding and positive participation on the part of those whose program is being evaluated so that, as Hudson's charter provides, he must "deliver...an account of...whatsoever shall happen...without keeping anything back."

For a charter to be approved, it would have to contain a predetermined program evaluation plan which involved genuine outside participation.

I think you can see that there is a reasonable fit between the elements of a charter from the Age of Exploration and the elements of a charter which could be used by a school board to fund educational programs for a period of three to five years.

There are many questions which have to be addressed, such as: What kinds of programs can be funded under charters? How many teachers should there be on charter teams? How many charters will we have in the Hometown Public Schools in five years? What kind of support services would be needed to keep 20 to 25 charters operating?

We'll be getting to some of these questions as we go along this morning, but for now, let's define an educational charter as "a written instrument used by a school board to directly fund a team of teachers to carry out an educational program for a period of three-to-five years."

We're not entirely in strange territory as we think about organizing our school district around Education by Charter.

The Hometown Public Schools already has program experiences which will be of great help as we test out the feasibility of Education by Charter. The organizational elements of Education by Charter — such as: building curriculum on the basis of societal needs; designating beginning and ending dates for funding cycles; planning for individual needs and learning styles of students; and providing outside program evaluation. We all know what these programs are — and many of you serve as staff for these programs: vocational education, Chapter I compensatory education, special education, and the replication of validated national products. And many of the structural timbers of the present traditional school district organization will need to remain in place. It's just that in Education by Charter the major boxes on the organizational chart are moved around a bit and the whole operation is placed into a longer timeframe.

How then do we proceed if we want to organize the function of instruction around the concept of Education by Charter?

First of all, let me tell you how we ought *not* to proceed and that is to somehow divide all "Knowledge and Skills Needed, K-12" into 25 or 30 chunks, put everybody on one or more Charter Planning Teams, spend two weeks next summer writing charters, and, BINGO! by this time next year we're all into Education by Charter. This would be disastrous!

Getting into something new takes time, especially when that something new involves changing roles and relationships in your organization. Let's take the time to get our feet wet. I would like two or three teams to give Education by Charter a try. Let's see if the idea works and let's get the bugs out of it. And if it doesn't work, we will have learned some important things in the process.

Life Cycle of an Educational Charter

To help you know what I'm asking you to consider, let's walk through the "Five Stages in the Life Cycle of a Three-Year Educational Charter." Here we come to the only handout of the morning...

Several persons in the front row assist Dr. Wright in distributing copies of Figure 3 to the teachers.

Glance at the chart for a few minutes and then we'll go through it step by step — or rather "stage by stage." "Stage" actually is a better word than "step" as it implies things happening over a period of time. "Step," it seems, is more applicable to a single happening which might occur instantaneously or within a very short period of time.

First of all, notice the long, thin horizontal box at the top of Figure 3 with "Career Development and Inservice Education Activities Can Feed in at any Stage" typed inside of it. I think it's crucial that our personal, individual career development activities as well as inservice education activities be fused into the program and curriculum development needs of the school district. And of practical value to all of us, the cost of professionals acquiring new knowledge and skills is a legitimate cost of educating students and should be paid for out of the regular school budget.

Note that acquiring new ideas and processing them can be a part of any of the five stages of Education by Charter — this is not limited to Stage 4 when a charter is functioning with pupils.

Now let's go through the five stages in the life cycle of a three-year educational charter.

Stage 1. Generating Ideas

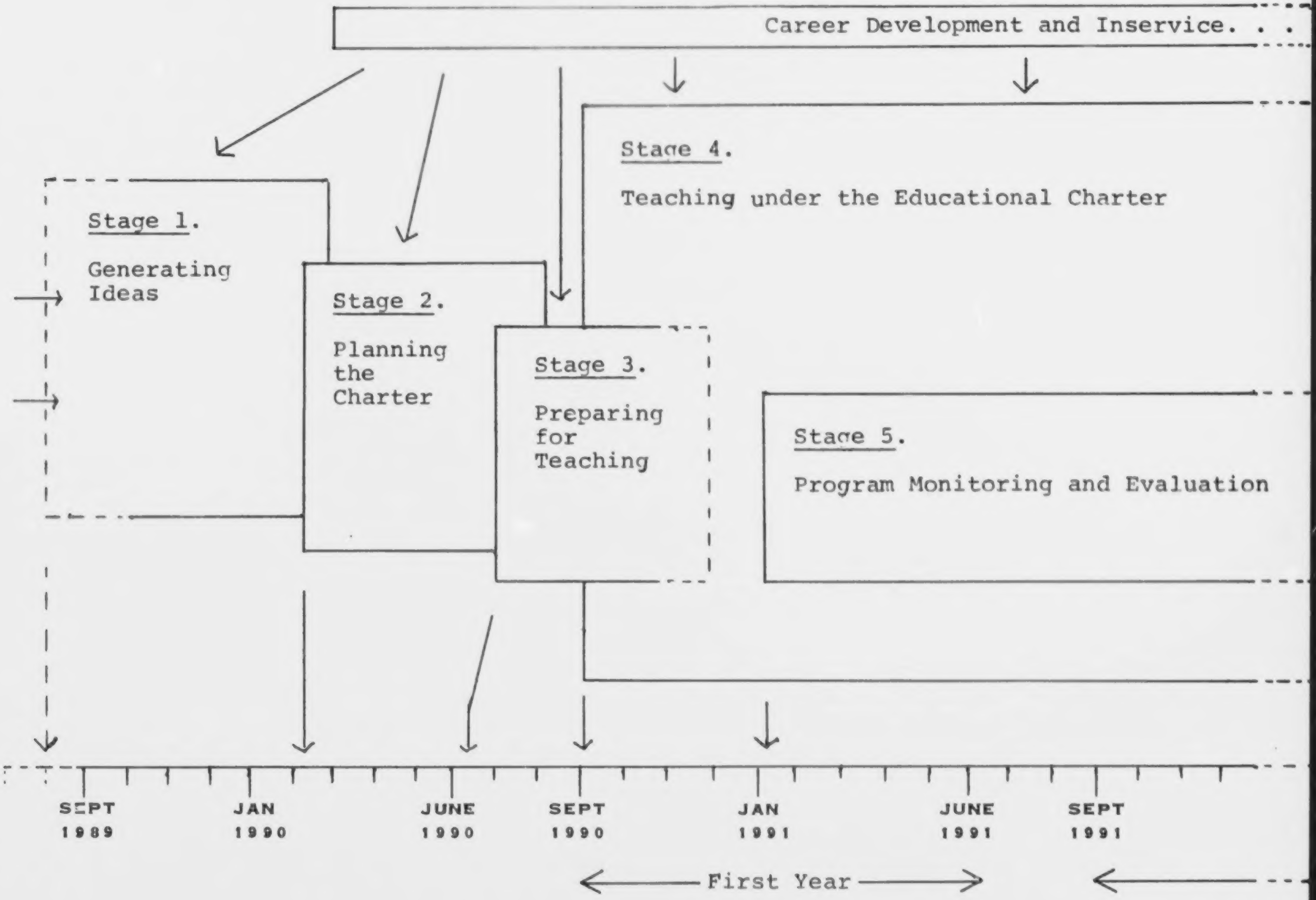
The initial impetus for wanting to teach under an educational charter may come from one or more of a number of sources:

- Strong dissatisfaction with the present curriculum or teaching situation.
- Excitement from trying out a successful new teaching strategy which could be developed and expanded.
- Ideas a group of teachers bring back from a workshop led by a nationally known figure in education.
- A new plan for organizing instruction learned by a teacher taking a graduate course in administration.
- Ideas picked up during a visitation to a classroom in another school.
- Ideas generated from reading, and/or viewing video cassettes and television programs.
- Pressures felt by teachers and administrators to respond to the hidden and not so hidden criticism of schools found in the various national reports calling for educational reform.

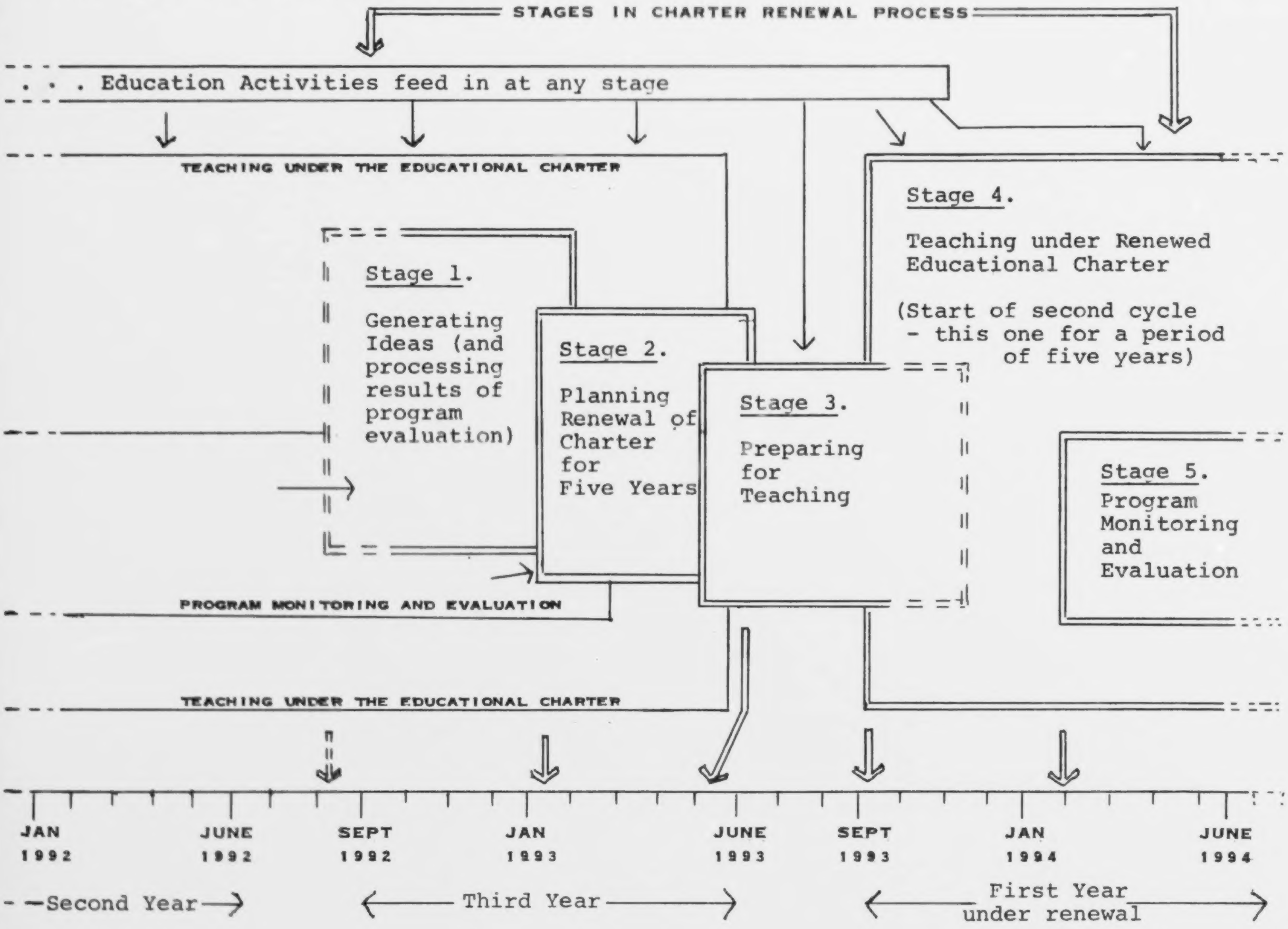
After initial exposure to some new ideas, a group of teachers would meet. Interested parents or other citizens of the community might join in these preliminary discussions. Selected use of consultants might be helpful. Provision would be made in the Charter Planning Account to pay teachers for extra time and to cover costs of consultants.

The dotted lines on the box for Stage 1 indicate that there may be a rather fuzzy starting point and a rather indefinite time period for this stage. The time of closure for Stage 1, however, is very definite. When the team of teachers feels like it

Figure 3. Five Stages in the Life Cycle of. . .


Career Development and Inservice. . .
Stage 4.
Teaching under the Educational Charter
Stage 1.
Generating Ideas
Stage 2.
Planning the Charter
Stage 3.
Preparing for Teaching
Stage 5.
Program Monitoring and Evaluation
SEPT 1989
JAN 1990
JUNE 1990
SEPT 1990
JAN 1991
JUNE 1991
SEPT 1991
First Year

. . .a Three-Year Educational Charter


STAGES IN CHARTER RENEWAL PROCESS
. . . Education Activities feed in at any stage
TEACHING UNDER THE EDUCATIONAL CHARTER
Stage 1.
Generating Ideas (and processing results of program evaluation)
Stage 2.
Planning Renewal of Charter for Five Years
Stage 3.
Preparing for Teaching
Stage 4.
Teaching under Renewed Educational Charter
(Start of second cycle - this one for a period of five years)
Stage 5.
Program Monitoring and Evaluation
PROGRAM MONITORING AND EVALUATION
TEACHING UNDER THE EDUCATIONAL CHARTER
JAN 1992
JUNE 1992
SEPT 1992
JAN 1993
JUNE 1993
SEPT 1993
JAN 1994
JUNE 1994
Second Year
Third Year
First Year under renewal

has sufficient preliminary ideas and is so motivated, it makes a ten-minute presentation directly to the school board in which it requests funds to plan their charter.

To assist teams of teachers in obtaining resources for planning, I am preparing a concise single page, two-sided form, REQUEST FOR CHARTER PLANNING FUNDS.

The front side of the form would include items such as: subject or curriculum areas; ages or grades of pupils to be taught under the prospective charter; a list of exploratory steps the team has gone through thus far; names of all of the persons who would make up the Charter Planning Committee; preliminary plans for meetings and activities including inservice education and professional growth activities; and the type and amount of secretarial and support services needed.

On the reverse side of the form would be space for a budget for items such as: extra-time stipends for teachers; fees and expenses for consultants; registrations for workshops and courses; costs for visiting programs in other schools; and the amount needed for compensation of secretary and/or other support personnel. At the bottom of this second side would be a place for the school board chairperson to indicate the decision made with regard to the request for planning funds. The board's three alternatives would be: approval as submitted; approval with recommended changes; or denial with reasons for denial.

A most important final task for the team of teachers in Stage 1 would be to develop a sharp, concise ten-minute presentation to the school board indicating why this planning money is needed and what might be the potential benefits to students if this charter were planned and ultimately implemented.

Stage 2. Planning the Charter

Stage 2 begins with the approval of the request for planning funds by the school board. This stage could vary in length from several months to a year or more. On your handout (Figure 3), the length of time indicated is about four months. Stage 2 ends with the team of teachers (who make up only part of the Charter Planning Committee) submitting the educational charter to the school board for approval.

The Charter Planning Committee would have the membership indicated in the request for funds. It would set up its own organization and procedures for making decisions. The Charter Planning Committee would engage in many of the same kind of activities as those on the "impetus list"in Stage 1. "Generating ideas" would still continue but activities would become more focused as the time came for writing and submitting the charter.

Strategic use of small group process

Gathering ideas is important, but equally important is the manner in which a group processes the ideas it has gathered.

In our zeal to individualize instruction, in our preoccupation with our own individual personal growth, and in our overuse of the medium group size of 25 to 30 (classroom size), we tend to forget about the power and creativity inherent in the small group where the size of the group might be between eight and fifteen members — all of whom are struggling with the same complex, contentious problem.

I would recommend that midway through the charter planning period the committee spend two days (including the evening between the two days) in a workshop/retreat setting. It would be well if the deliberations of the group were led by an outside facilitator.

During these two days, the committee would totally immerse itself in all aspects and details of the vision for a new or revitalized educational program. Multiple resources should be used including: a child or adolescent psychologist who would be strong in learning and behavior theory; professors or other experts in the subject fields; teachers outside the school district who are already implementing all or part of the desired new program; etc.

I would not have the Charter Planning Committee come to any closure at the end of these two days. Let me slip into the role of facilitator at the closing session: "Our purpose for these two days was not to nail anything down, but rather it was to flush out all the ideas, options, programs, and structures which relate to our vision. Now I want you to let these ideas incubate for a while, to bounce around in your head, and then see if, individually or in conversations with others, you can start putting all these ideas into a program that can form the basis for our charter. We will meet for a whole day just ten days from now — our same group in the same place and at the end of that day we will know if all the good things we have been thinking about can happen." That third day, then, is the time when the components of people, resources, time, and space are put together to form the charter educational program.

Preparing the educational charter

I have not completed the actual form for the educational charter. I would see it as a carefully constructed, folded, single piece of paper, 11"× 17" in size. This format gives us four 8½"× 11" sides which, when printed, would provide space for all the information a school board would need to act on a request for a charter.

And there's an advantage in using a folded form. The form itself could be designed to be a file folder for the many items which would accumulate during the life of the charter.

There are two different kinds of items which should be included on the charter form. The first kind has to do with gathering information relative to the charter being a long-term agreement between the school board and the charter team. Examples of the first kind of items would be:

1. Date and title of the charter.
2. Beginning and ending dates of the charter.
3. Wording to the effect that the charter places specific responsibilities and obligations on both parties to the agreement.
4. Space at the end of the charter for signatures of the grantor (minimum of a majority of a quorum present at a particular meeting of the school board) and grantee (the team of teachers requesting the charter).

There are a number of alternatives with regard to the second kind of items to be included on the charter form. The specific responsibilities and obligations of each party could be listed. A more functional alternative would be to include only items which are "program monitor-able" and "program evaluate-able." Doing this would automatically provide us with the structure for Stage 5. Program Monitoring and Evaluation. The information provided for each of these items would then become a category for documentation during the life of the charter.

Among this second kind of items, I would see the following as being "observable," "monitor-able," and "evaluate-able":

- Projected enrollment by grade level and subject area over the life of the charter.
- Disciplines and fields of knowledge which provide the rationale and support for this charter program.

- Applicable psychologies of learning and the manner in which individualization and group process are used to maximize the learning of every pupil.
- Links with pupil personnel services and community human services agencies.
- Plan for helping pupils acquire the skills and attitudes to become learners in school and outside of school and to become lifelong learners.
- Pupil learning objectives stated in as measurable terms as possible; group and individual testing program for pupils and how this relates to schoolwide and state-mandated testing programs; and the manner in which results of testing will be used.
- Pattern of courses and learning experiences for pupils during the life of the charter.
- Assignments of teachers, aides, clerical staff, and volunteers.
- Examples of how career development and inservice education activities will be fused with the curriculum and program needs of the charter.
- Plan for encouraging parents and others from the community to help and support courses and programs of the charter.
- Plan for use of textbooks, references, computers, and school and community libraries and media centers.
- Program budget for major categories for the three-to-five-year operation of the charter, including an estimated amount needed for extra pay for extra time for teachers; amounts would be set according to current price levels and provisions in the negotiated contract.
- Manner in which the charter team is organized for decision making; relationship to optional Charter Advisory Committee.
- Summary of how data could be collected to serve as documentation for program monitoring and evaluation; designation of two teachers to serve on a five-person Program Monitoring and Evaluation Committee.

The final step in Stage 2 as in Stage 1 is a presentation of a request to the school board.

Here we have a hard reality to face: the school board's heavy agenda. You can see that if numerous teams of teachers have to make presentations to request planning funds and if many of these teams go on to request approval of charters, there is a danger that the already overloaded agenda will become even more overloaded. I'm working with the board to see if we can't streamline the meetings so that in a year from now they will be able to devote at least half of their time to curriculum and instructional matters. And this is as it should be — the policy body of a school district rightfully should spend at least half its time directly on what the schools are in business for, the educational programs for children and youth.

But we need to be careful at our end of it as well. If you'll remember, I recommended limiting any presentation for the REQUEST FOR CHARTER PLANNING FUNDS to ten minutes, with an additional five minutes for the board to use to ask questions. Let's try twenty minutes as an appropriate amount of time for a team of teachers to request approval of a charter. This would leave ten minutes for a question and answer period.

One reason why this might work is that I would want the completed charter in the hands of school board members at least one month prior to the meeting at which they would have to act on it. This month's lead time would be of advantage to the charter team in that it would give sufficient time to develop a sharp, concise, and interesting twenty-minute presentation. Options for media for a presentation are obvious: slide-cassette program; videotape; transparencies; felt tip pen and newsprint; printed materials; etc. This kind of preparation time would make it possible for the development of a superlative presentation.

One important serendipity of these communications and presentations: what a wonderful and meaningful way to continually educate our school board members (and community through the press coverage) about what we do in our classrooms!

Stage 2 then, ends with the school board taking one of three actions on the request for a charter: accepting it as written; accepting it with recommendations for changes; or denying the charter and providing in writing the reasons for denial.

Stage 3. Preparing for Teaching

The length of Stage 3 could vary from three to nine months. A team which had its charter approved at the January meeting of the board would have nine months until the start of the next school year to prepare for teaching under the charter. On the life cycle chart, a charter approved at the May meeting gives the charter team a period of four months for preparations before classes start in September.

Time usage in Stage 3 as in Stages 1 and 2 is not solid time, but rather a well planned sequence of activities which would have to be undertaken before any new program of studies could start. Stage 3 activities would include:

- Completing writing the curriculum to be implemented under the charter.
- Further developing the details of how individual career development activities and inservice educational programs will be used to support the objectives and programs of the charter.
- If stated in the charter, restructuring the Charter Planning Committee into a Charter Advisory Committee.
- Assisting the two teachers designated to serve on the Program Monitoring and Evaluation Committee with their responsibility for documenting charter programs and activities.
- Developing and printing a brochure to explain the educational program to parents and students.
- Making sure that pupil enrollment procedures as well as space and scheduling needs are taken care of.
- Ordering texts, references, audio-visual materials, and software.
- Working with the principal to set up secretarial and clerical services as provided in the charter.

Stage 3 ends or kind of melds into the time school actually starts under the charter. Generally that would be in late August or early September at the start of a new school year. But charter operations could commence at the start of the second semester in January or at any time during the school year.

Stage 4. Teaching under the Charter

Stage 4 simply stated is "school" — school is in operation, courses have begun, pupils are in classes, and teachers are teaching.

An upgraded K-12 function is already in place which will provide each charter team with budget status reports on the first day of each quarter in September, December, March, and June. Budget status reports for all or selected accounts would be available at any other time as requested.

The budget status report would indicate for each account: approved budget amount for each year; amount encumbered by purchases; expenditures; and amount of money still available for use.

As more and more charters come into operation, we will start getting some feel about the number and kind of other K-12 functions needed to support education by charter.

Career development and inservice education activities are carried out as planned. If there is need for replacing staff members, already agreed upon procedures in the charter would be implemented.

Three or four months are allowed to go by before any thought is given to starting Stage 5: Program Monitoring and Evaluation. This allows the charter team start-up time and the chance to experience what it's like to teach within an organization in which you and your colleagues have responsibility and control over your professional work.

Stage 4, ends when the charter expires at the end of three, four or five years.

Stage 5. Program Monitoring and Evaluation

Provisions for program monitoring and evaluation are included in the educational charter: composition of the Program Monitoring and Evaluation Committee; observable, tangible activities which can be monitored and evaluated; and the two designated teachers from the charter team who will serve on the committee.

I've done quite a bit of thinking about this stage — and particularly about how to achieve genuine "inside" and "outside" participation. We have to be careful as we work to create a new organization for the school district that it will not be destined to collapse by the sheer weight of the number of planning, advisory, and evaluation committees.

There are two phases to Stage 5. First, setting up a means for ongoing documentation and data collection. (Every program, every class, generates "monitor-able" and "evaluate-able" kinds of data through day-by-day operation — the trick is to collect this data without exerting high amounts of energy.) Secondly, a small group needs to be charged with the responsibility of sifting through the documentation and making some sense out of it to determine the extent to which the program is succeeding or failing.

Most of you who have had to have outside program evaluation for funded projects have turned to Dr. Robert Slesher, educational research specialist at State University as program evaluator. You have indicated to me that you find him to be a fair-minded, competent, and diligent person when it comes to evaluting educational programs. He has indicated that he would be available on a part-time, consultant basis to help us through the pilot phase of education by charter.

Dr. Slesher will work with the initial charter teams to set up a file drawer in which to gather evaluative data about charter activities as this data is generated. He would also chair a five-person monitoring and evaluation committee which would meet no more than three times a year to digest and analyze the data collected. This level of effort should be able to produce sufficient feedback to both the charter team and the school board during the life of the charter.

I would suggest the following membership for a charter's monitoring and evaluation committee: the two designated teachers from the charter team; a Hometown principal other than the principal of the building in which the charter classes are housed; a person with in-depth knowledge of the subject areas and age group, but not an employee of the Hometown Public Schools (this person could be a parent, a teacher from a neighboring school district, an instructor in teacher education etc.); and Dr. Slesher who would both chair and staff the committee.

Having the same person chair and be staff for each of the initial program monitoring and evaluation committees will help us determine the common and different threads of evaluative activities for different kinds of charters.

Early in the final year of the charter, the Program Monitoring and Evaluation Committee would summarize its conclusions under one of three recommendations: "The charter should be renewed as presently operating." "The charter should be renewed but some important changes need to be made." or "The charter should not be renewed for the following reasons..."

This recommendation, then, is submitted to the school board with the charter team's request for funds to plan for renewal or when the charter team makes its final report.

I've said nothing thus far about teacher evaluation. I expressed my opinions on teacher evaluation in some detail during the question and answer session in my meeting with the teachers association last April.

Let me pose the same questions I raised then. *Answer these questions on the basis of your own experience with, and knowledge about, teacher evaluation either here in Hometown or in other school districts.*

- On the basis of teacher evaluation, how many incompetent teachers have been fired?
- On the basis of teacher evaluation, how many so-so, boring, humdrum teachers have been counseled to move out of education into another area of endeavor?
- On the basis of teacher evaluation, how many exciting, relevant inservice education experiences have materialized for staff?
- On the basis of teacher evaluation, how many teachers have been motivated to conceptualize realistic and meaningful lifelong career plans?
- On the basis of teacher evaluation, how many competent career teachers are writing articles for professional journals and serving on state and national committees and councils?

I'm not saying we do away with our present teacher evaluation plan. Actually, what has been developed here in Hometown is one of the best I've seen. Let's continue with it in an honest, straightforward manner. But I would like to invest more of my time — and I would like principals and supervisors to invest more of their time — in helping develop an organization for the school district in which teachers have full responsiblity for and operating control over their professional jobs.

Forgive this aside. I kind of get carried away when I talk about teacher evaluation. I think that out of our experience with Education by Charter may come an even more productive plan for teacher evaluation.

Let's get back to our handout on the stages in the life cycle of an educational charter. Note that Stage 4. Teaching under the Charter and Stage 5. Program Monitoring and Evaluation feed right into Stages 1, 2, and 3 of the charter renewal process. And this happens well before the end of the last year in the life of the original charter. This overlap in timing will insure that there is no break in the educational program should the decision be made to renew the charter.

Now to my third question of the morning. This will be much briefer and will conclude my remarks this morning.

3. How might we as a school district move toward Education by Charter?

It's not often that we think about organizational matters — especially about whether or not to take apart the structure we're now working in (and we may be very comfortable working in) and seeing if we can put the pieces together in a different way to enable us to do an even better job. And I have to admit that "reorganizing" is tiring and anxiety-ridden. But this, I think, is good evidence of how important the framework is that we choose to work in.

As Frank Lloyd Wright said so eloquently, "We build houses, and then they build us." Our present organization (our prescribed roles in the school district) allows us to do some things and boxes us in with regard to doing other things.

Well, what do we do with our old "house?" Cast it off? We can't do that — the result would be chaos. But let's break it apart a bit and see what happens.

I would like two, three, or four teams of teachers to give Education by Charter a try. This year would be for exploring and planning; no charter would start until next September.

As three or four teams try Education by Charter, we will start getting a feel for some other dimensions of our new school district organization. How am I as a superintendent going to feel about that first charter going directly to the school board from a team of teachers without my having to make a recommendation? Will I be happy as the "senior teacher" of planning? How will a principal feel about being a support person to several teams of teachers instead of being the "educational leader?" How will a teaching principal react to being a member but not the chairperson of charter team? How will parents "behave" on Charter Planning Committees and Program Monitoring Committees? How real is it to expect that we can teach in such a way that pupils genuinely take responsibility for their own learning and behavior? Can we, through modeling and other means, help pupils realize that we are now living in the Information Age and that lifelong learning skills are as necessary as is learning how to read? I think it's going to be exciting, and perhaps a bit threatening.

In addition, I think we'll get some definite ideas of what K-12 functions all charters would need — presuming that the idea works and that in a few years 75% of education in Hometown might be under charters. Will "Curriculum," "Personnel Services," "Pupil Personnel Services," and "Business Office" be adequate K-12 functions to support charters? Will we need to abandon these and start from scratch with a new districtwide support system that more closely fits the needs of 25 or 30 educational charters?

And finally, I think we'll want to be alert to what happens to the "ethos" of our individual schools. All of us have experienced the power of community when we have worked as part of a school staff in a building where the atmosphere was positive and supportive. Occasionally we may have been part of a school that was shaken by a crisis or experienced personality conflicts amongst the staff — and the atmosphere seemed poisoned and sour. As the number of charters increase, I would hope that those not in charters become interested observers and that we do all we can to encourage communication among all staff members in a school. Nothing could kill Education by Charter quicker than if we split ourselves into two camps: the "regulars" and those on charter teams.

Let's not forget that Education by Charter provides us with a vehicle for achieving both a longer, restructured school year for pupils and a full-time, professional year for teachers.

You have been most patient. I've asked principals for at least an hour in each of your building meetings during the next day and a half. This has been quite a dose and I'm sure we'll have a lot to talk about in these building meetings. Thank you for listening. Have a good day!

Dr Wright met with each building staff and answered many questions about Education by Charter. He outlined the steps a group of teachers could take if they wanted to be a pilot charter team.

Dr. Wright sensed a reluctance to volunteer —that seemed natural, after all, volunteers sometimes got shot at! By mid-October, however, there were three groups of teachers interested in becoming pilot teams. In each case, the teachers either had something they wanted to try out or else they saw Education by Charter as a means for confronting some major, continuing frustrations.

- *Over the past two years, many of the kindergarten and primary teachers at Brookside Elementary School took courses and participated in workshops in which they were exposed to a whole new set of ideas about how to teach beginning reading and writing. They have been wanting to visit some other schools as well as organize a two-day inservice for all kindergarten and primary teachers in Hometown; but somehow there was never the time or energy to get beyond just talking about this new "language growth" approach to teaching beginning communication skills.*
- *For years, the middle school math and science teachers and the fourth and fifth-grade teachers who taught math and science have feuded over the "why," "how," "what," and the "when" to teach math and science. Part of the difficulty was due to the fact that the teachers taught in four different buildings. They really had to go out of their way to talk to one another. Perhaps Education by Charter would be a means for bringing some reason into this emotion-charged situation.*
- *At the high school, several English, social studies, and art teachers had taken federally funded humanities institutes during the past two summers. They would like to explore the feasibility of setting up a "Humanities Department" as a way of pulling together some related subjects for college-bound juniors and seniors. They felt these students were not being helped to see the relationship of important ideas in various subjects which were now being taught in a separate and isolated fashion.*

In EVENTS 5, 6, and 7, Mary Brown (first grade teacher), Ronald Jenkins (middle school mathematics teacher), and Dorothy Parker (chairperson of the high school English Department) will be making presentations to the Hometown School Board at three different points in time in the life cycle of an educational charter.

Event 5.

Request for charter planning funds by the primary teachers of the Brookside Elementary School.

Scene.

The kindergarten, first- and second-grade teachers at Brookside, one of the three elementary schools in Hometown, are very excited about some new ideas for teaching beginning reading and writing. Of particular interest is how the teaching of these skills can be enhanced by the adoption of a "whole language" rationale for the primary curriculum.

Mary Brown, veteran first-grade teacher at Brookside, has been asked by her colleagues to request charter planning funds at the February, 1989 meeting of the Hometown School Board.

Thank you, Ms. O'Keefe (chairperson of school board). You have our completed REQUEST FOR CHARTER PLANNING FUNDS with the attached chart (Figure 4) which illustrates the relationships among the various components of the primary curriculum we would like to implement next fall. Here's why we think it makes sense to move in this direction.

As you know, since the early 1980's, the state has required basic skills testing at odd-numbered grade levels starting with Grade 1. At first we tested for just reading and mathematics. Two years ago, writing (composition) was added.

Our response as primary teachers in Hometown was similar to what primary teachers did in other school districts — we started to specialize and then we started to clamp down. Kindergarten teachers beefed up their efforts to have pupils learn their letters and numbers. In first and second grades, we started exchanging pupils so that teachers who felt stronger teaching reading taught reading and teachers who felt stronger teaching mathematics taught mathematics.

Several years ago the budget allowed us to add three special subjects all the way down to first grade — art, music and physical education. As you can see, our six, seven, and eight year olds are moving around quite a bit from teacher to teacher.

We took a look at our pupils' schedules — especially the schedules for first and second graders. We discovered that our six and seven year olds moved more times during the week than middle school students! And to top it off, Chapter I pupils were being "pulled out" of our classrooms an additional three times per week — and these pupils needed the stability of same time and same place even more than the rest of the pupils!

With all this concentrated effort on basic skills teaching, one would think that the the state-mandated test results would start to show some significant improvement. This has not happened. In general the test results have flattened out and the score for comprehension in reading has actually started to drop.

Dr. Martha Barton, Superintendent of the Selma Alabama Public Schools, in an article in the *Christian Science Monitor*, has stated the problem this way:

> In recent years there's been an overemphasis on basic skills, and it's been disastrous for young children. The excessive drill and practive on isolated skills left many of them floundering...[24]

We're starting to notice something else about our young boys and girls — and it's hard to put your finger on this, let alone test it. Our boys and girls, especially those who are less mature, seem to always be on edge. Their attention spans are very short. We're not sure how to motivate them to work on the reading and phonics tasks we think they should be doing. They seem passive —except when we get out the large picture books which were just recently published. There's very little print in these books and the words that are in the books are in very large print. But the pictures are just beautiful, almost life size!

Another thing we've noticed is that there's no trouble at all when we are viewing a good educational video or television program. No problem with the attention span when this is happening.

Perhaps we are beginning to see the impact of television on this, the third generation of children who are growing up with television in the home. And it occurred to us as we thought about this that this is the first generation of children whose parents had significant exposure to television when they were children.

So last year, as you know, we took an anonymous survey of parents to determine the viewing habits of our young pupils. *What* they looked at was disturbing. But what was even more disturbing was the amount of viewing time per week: the average was 23 hours per week; some five and six year olds were spending more than 30 hours a week in front of the tube. It's rather sobering to think that many of our pupils are spending more time passively viewing television than they spend in school! Was this not something that we as teachers of beginning reading and writing should be concerned about? And if we were concerned, was there anything we could do about it?

We think we have found one approach which, with support from our parents, will help our kindergarten and primary boys and girls make a quantum leap in learning their basic skills.

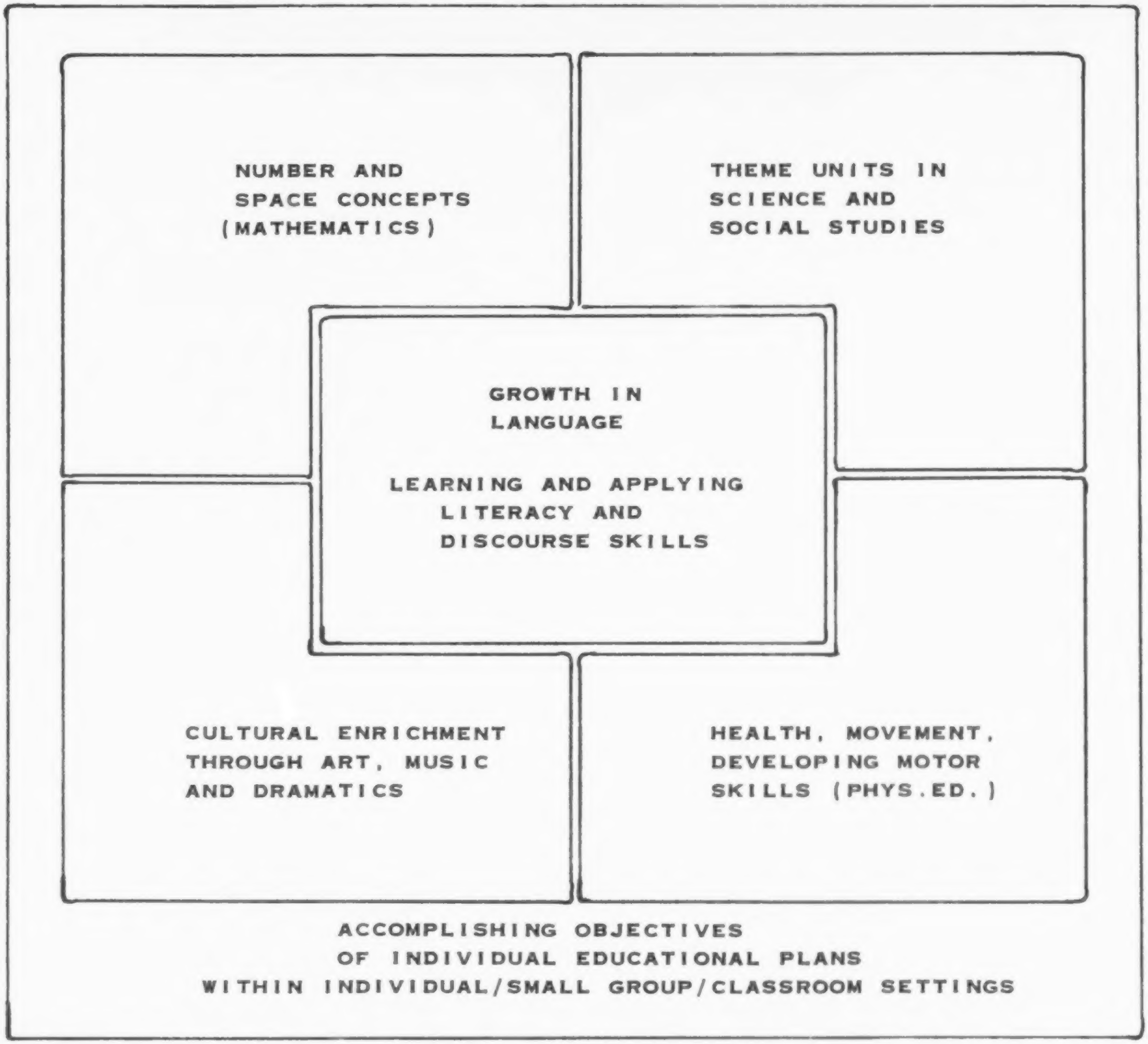
The whole language approach

The primary teachers at Brookside and several of the teachers in the other two elementary schools are becoming increasingly interested in a new approach in educating five-to-eight-year-old children. The three premises of this "whole language" approach are:

- The different aspects of language — reading, writing, speaking, listening, vocabulary building, phonics, syntax, semantics — are all interrelated and interdependent.
- Writing should be taught along with reading, some say even before reading. Doing this helps children understand that they can express *their* ideas using letters and words which they and others can then read. Right now a child might define reading and writing as filling in the blanks on ditto worksheets. There may be a considerable delay before children discover that reading has any real personal meaning or practical value.
- All areas of the curriculum provide young children with opportunities to have real-life experiences which can form a base for helping them develop "whole language power."

There are many sources of ideas and rationale for this new approach to primary education. The more important ones are listed in our request for planning funds: James Moffett's model for a language curriculum; numerous nationally

Figure 4. Curriculum for Kindergarten - Grade Two
Primary Education Charter


NUMBER AND SPACE CONCEPTS (MATHEMATICS)
THEME UNITS IN SCIENCE AND SOCIAL STUDIES
GROWTH IN LANGUAGE
LEARNING AND APPLYING LITERACY AND DISCOURSE SKILLS
CULTURAL ENRICHMENT THROUGH ART, MUSIC AND DRAMATICS
HEALTH, MOVEMENT, DEVELOPING MOTOR SKILLS (PHYS.ED.)
ACCOMPLISHING OBJECTIVES OF INDIVIDUAL EDUCATIONAL PLANS WITHIN INDIVIDUAL/SMALL GROUP/CLASSROOM SETTINGS

validated writing projects such as the New Jersey Writing Project and the Williamstown (Massachusetts) "Everybody Write" Project; IBM's software program on learning to read by writing; etc. There are a number of school districts within close driving distance which have experienced success in some of these programs. (We have money in our request for groups of teachers and parents to visit some of these programs.)

Components for new primary program

You might want to glance at the diagram of the curriculum (Figure 4) while I go over what we will want to have tied together in our request for a three-year charter.

We need to develop a schedule which gives classroom teachers more longer blocks of time during the week. This is necessary because of the way in which we will be teaching beginning reading and writing. In addition, the longer time periods will help us do a better job of integrating art, music, and dramatics into the regular activities of the classroom.

For this age child, it is not necessary to consider social studies or science as being sequential subjects. They do not have to be studied every day or even every week. By organizing these subjects into "thematic units" and alternating social studies and science, we go even further in creating longer blocks of time. A major task during the charter planning period will be to choose the units we want to use and then gather resources and ideas on which to base lesson plans.

I'm sure we will be recommending all-day kindergarten for next year for this charter. I know the board has been talking about this ever since the sixth grade moved in with the seventh and eighth grade to create the middle school. Having all-day kindergarten in one school will give the town a chance to pilot test the idea before making the change for the whole school district.

We're planning to have overlapping ages in each grade: five and six year olds in kindergarten; five, six and seven year olds in first grade; and six, seven, and eight year olds in second grade. This arrangement will give us flexibility in the placement of pupils — we would not be grouping by ability but we would be taking into account some maturity and developmental factors.

We want parents to be much more active in the education of their children. And this is already happening — in 75% of our homes this year, parents are trying out a nationally developed program for helping children reduce the amount of time they watch television as well as helping them make better choices in what they do watch. Several parents will be a part of the charter team and will help us figure out ways to promote "whole language growth" within the family setting.

Other activities during the charter planning period are listed in our request for funds. Please note that these activities are open to teachers and parents from the other two schools. . .I see Dr. Wright looking as his watch — my ten minutes on the agenda has turned into fourteen. I hope there is time for your questions.

Dr. Wright was forgiving inasmuch as this was the first request for charter planning funds. The board did have a few questions. They would like included in the request for a charter any studies of standardized test scores which would indicate that children learn how to read as well or better under the whole language approach than they do under present methods. . .At the conclusion of a short question and answer period, the school board approved the request for charter planning funds and the primary teachers at Brookside moved into Stage 2. Planning the Charter.

Event 6.

Report of elementary and middle school mathematics and science teachers on the use of planning funds.

Scene.

For a number of years, there has been considerable bickering back and forth between later elementary teachers and middle school teachers on the what and the how of teaching mathematics and science to children nine to thirteen years of age.

In February, 1990, the middle school principal and the curriculum director called a meeting of math and science teachers in these grades to see if there was any interest in trying Education by Charter as a means of addressing these continuing problems and tensions.

There was interest, but it was felt that the group would be too large if all of the twenty teachers involved in the teaching of math and science became involved. The group decided to have the teachers on either side of the "gap" between the elementary and the middle schools make up the charter planning team, nine teachers: two from each of the elementary schools; one sixth-grade math teacher; one sixth-grade science teacher; and one teacher, Ronald Jenkins, who teaches both math and science in the sixth grade.

In April, the board approved the teachers' request for $1,500 in charter planning funds. And now, at the October, 1990 school board meeting, spokesman Ronald Jenkins is making his report on how the planning funds were used. The teachers, however, are not requesting an educational charter.

Thank you, . . . I would like to summarize the efforts of fifth and sixth-grade math and science teachers since we received planning funds last April.

Our first session in late April was a good one. We listed all the problems that needed to be addressed. By the end of the meeting, we felt good about being able to work together to solve them.

But a real hitch developed when we tried to figure out a schedule for meetings during the late spring and summer. Two of the middle school teachers had full-time summer jobs which started right after school ended. Three fifth-grade teachers had already paid for package tours to Europe.

We were able to meet twice before the end of school and we made some progress in coordinating the math program of the elementary and secondary schools. At our last meeting in the spring, we decided to spend an entire day and evening in late August to see if we could resolve the tough remaining issues. Several members of the charter planning team would be attending a three-day science curriculum institute in July. They might be able to bring back some fresh ideas that would get us out of the bind of teaching overlapping science units in fifth and sixth grades.

Well, we had the August meeting. Dr. Clarence Green, the school psychologist, chaired the discussions. Dr. Green has no background in either of the subjects, but he has considerable skill in helping people in a group get all their concerns out on the table and then addressing them.

Our day ended with an agreement on four solutions which we will be trying during the next two years.

1. *Extend the elementary schools' "Developmental Mathematics Program" up through sixth grade.* The sixth-grade math teachers had never examined this program in detail. They were pleasantly surprised with the depth of the concepts and the variety of activities in this curriculum. At their request, the distributor provided a training session which was completed just last week. They will be using parts of the curriculum this year with full implementation scheduled for next September. This, then, in mathematics at least will be quite a strong bridge across the gap between fifth and sixth grades.
2. *Establish sets of alternating year theme units in science in fourth and fifth grades.* Under this plan, teachers will be covering a common set of science units in both grades four and five each year. (During the following year, there would be a second set of science units for both grades. And, if this plan works, the two-year sequence can be continued.) Teachers in the two grades will be able to do a lot of things together.
3. *Provide a half-time helping teacher in science for grades four and five.* Starting in January, I have arranged with my middle school principal and the elementary principals and teachers to be a "helping science teacher" in grades four and five. My responsibilities will include developing written curriculum for the ten theme units and assisting teachers in gathering resources and trying some hands-on approaches in teaching science.
4. *Design and pilot test a MATH-SCIENCE SKILLS SUMMARY CARD which will help us keep track of an individual pupil's progress from fifth through eighth grade.* We will use these cards in a meeting each May to share information about individual pupils — which students are doing well, who might need Chapter I help, and which pupils have capabilities and motivation which enable them to go way beyond our standard curriculum. For these more able pupils, we are developing some individual and small group independent study projects.

This, in a sense, is a two-year plan; but it's not an educational charter. Being in four different buildings and having many conflicting school and personal schedules made it difficult for us as a charter planning team. We felt very uncomfortable about moving to the next stage and being a charter team. We decided not to apply for an educational charter.

As to the planning money — we did not use it to finance our summer vacations! Page 4 in our report spells out exactly how it was used and that $600 of the $1,500 was returned to the Charter Planning Account. . .Thank you for your time. I would be glad to answer any questions. . .

Dr. Wright was obviously disappointed that this second group of teachers decided not to apply for an educational charter. In a way, these teachers were caught up in a "chicken-before-the-egg trap." Education by Charter was meant to help teachers work their way toward being employed for the whole year; but, in this case, summer jobs and vacation plans made within the context of the old school year prevented teachers from participating in planning an educational charter.

Dr. White did recognize, however, that the elementary and middle school math and science teachers had resolved a number of sticky problems and had planned to meet each spring to keep the lines of communication open.

Event 7.

Request for educational charter for a humanities program for high school juniors and seniors.

Scene

During March 1987 Hometown High School had its ten-year visit by an accreditation team from the Mid-Central Association of Schools and Colleges.

As part of this evaluation, members of the accrediting team made a detailed study of the actual subjects taken by a representative sample of twenty seniors. After reviewing course selections, each student was interviewed to determine his/her reasons for choosing the subjects which had been taken during high school.

The patterns of courses taken during ninth and tenth grades were rather similar, as pupils were tied into taking numerous required courses. For eleventh and twelfth grades, however, the patterns of courses taken seemed very unpredictable, even chaotic. The reasons students gave for their choices seldom had anything to do with any inherent academic interest: "Marjorie and I wanted to be in the same classes — we've been in the same classes ever since third grade;" "I didn't take Mr. Grey's physics course as I needed to keep my grade point average up — and he gives only three 'A's' in each class"; "I took an extra academic class in my junior year so I could coast when I became a senior"; etc.

Let's hear the rest of the story from Dorothy Parker, chairperson of the English Department and spokesperson for the Charter Planning Committee, at the January, 1990 meeting of the Hometown School Board. Ms. Parker is concluding her remarks about how high school teachers from several departments became interested in possibly starting a humanities program for juniors and seniors.

. . .and I guess we could have predicted the reasons our seniors would give for choosing courses during their last two years of high school. For years each department had been offering a whole string of electives which we thought had some basis in either student interest or would provide content or skills needed for college or work. Actually, if we're honest with ourselves, our selections were based much more on what we liked to teach or what we felt prepared to teach.

The accreditation team made a strong recommendation that the staff study the problem of the proliferation of electives during the junior and senior years. They charged us with the responsibility of coming up with a unifying philosophy or rationale for the educational program for the last two years of high school. One member of the team thought that "the humanities" would be worth considering as a consolidating concept. She gave us the name and address of a contact person in the office of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

During the next school year, four of us were successful in applying for funds to attend summer institutes. During the summer of 1988, two teachers participated in "A Collaborative Project for the Combined Study of Literature and History"; one teacher attended the "Summer Institute for Pre-Collegiate Instructors in the Humanities"; and the fourth teacher had a strong interest in written composition attended the "Humanities and Writing Project."

Early in the fall after the summer institutes, several of us became members of an advisory committee which assisted Professor Zwingli at State University in his application for funding an "Institute for Developing a High School Humanities Program." The application was approved and the institute was held this past summer. Because Hometown High School was designated in the grant as being a pilot school, we filled eight of the twenty enrollment slots. We were responsible for developing a humanities program for juniors and seniors for our own high school.

With our application for a charter, you were each given a copy of the humanities curriculum manual which we wrote last summer. If you will turn to Figure 5 on Page 14, you will see a good overview of how the program will start with 50 juniors next fall and can be expanded to 200 juniors and seniors by 1995-1996. Should the Program Monitoring and Evaluation Committee make the judgment that the charter should not be renewed, the program can be phased down during the last two years of the charter.

The humanities program will function in half-day time blocks — either in the morning or afternoon. This will allow for activities such as: visiting museums; doing extended research and writing projects; writing and rehearsing plays; and inviting outside speakers. Once a month the humanities program will offer an evening seminar or dramatic presentation in which parents and others from the community would be participating.

What will we be tying together in our proposed humanities program? History, literature, government, composition, art, dramatics, and, to a certain extent, linguistics and foreign languages.

We had an intense debate within the Charter Planning Team as to whether or not a student would have to have earned at least a "B" average before being admitted to the program. We finally decided against having any such requirement and in favor of letting students and their parents make the decision. We are preparing a description of our program, and, if the school board grants the charter, we will have an evening meeting with juniors and their parents a week from Wednesday.

We still have a great deal of work to do. The teachers who will be teaching courses next year will be spending three weeks this summer locating and developing resources for lesson plans.

We sent a copy of our curriculum manual to the Mid-Central Association of Schools and Colleges for inclusion in our accreditation file. Our first five years under the educational charter will be completed well before the next visit of the accreditation team in the spring of 1997. The final report of our Program Monitoring and Evaluation Committee will demonstrate the efforts of the high school staff in developing a more sound rationale for the educational program for our juniors and seniors.

Figure 5. Humanities Program for Juniors and Seniors
Hometown Public Schools - 1991-1996

YEAR STARTING IN SEPTEMBER	THREE-PERIOD TIME BLOCKS MORNING OR AFTERNOON		SOURCES OF MODULES/UNITS CHOSEN AS COMPARISON/CONTRAST TO SELECTED PERIODS IN AMERICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE
	STUDENTS	TEACHERS[1]	
1991 First year	50 Juniors	1 English 1 History	1st Semester: Asian Studies 2nd Sem: Western Civilization
1992 Second Year	50 Juniors 50 Seniors	1 English 1 History 1 Econ/Gov. 1 Art	1st Semester: African Studies 2nd Sem: Latin American Studies
1993 Third Year	50 Juniors 50 Seniors	Same as the second year	1st Semester: Asian Studies 2nd Sem: Western Civilization
1994 Fourth Year	100 Juniors* 50 Seniors*	Add two teachers*	1st Semester: African Studies 2nd Sem: Latin American Studies
1995 Fifth Year	100 Juniors* 100 Seniors*	Add two more teachers*	1st Semester: Asian Studies 2nd Sem: Western Civilization

FINAL TWO YEARS IF PROGRAM IS TERMINATED

*Should the Program Monitoring and Evaluation Committee indicate at the end of the third year that it is not likely to recommend that the Humanities Charter be renewed:

1994 Fourth Year	50 Juniors 50 Seniors	Same as 1992 & 1993	1st Semester: African Studies 2nd Sem: Latin American Studies
1995 Fifth Year	No Juniors 50 Seniors	Same as 1991	1st Semester: Asian Studies 2nd Sem: Western Civilization

---

[1] Each teacher would be 3/5 time.

This, then, is our request for a five-year charter for a humanities program for high school juniors and seniors. I will be glad to entertain any questions.

The school board was impressed by the amount of work that had been done by the Charter Planning Team — work that had been done over a period of four years. They were pleased that the high school was getting away from the present chaotic array of electives for juniors and seniors. The board did express a concern that the teachers may be a bit too ambitious in trying to cover something like "Asian Studies" in one semester. Ms. Parker assured the board that "Asian Studies" was simply an area of studies from which highly selective units would be drawn. A major criterion for selection would be if a particular unit could be comparatively related to some era or chapter in American history.

There were no further questions. The board voted unanimously to grant a five-year charter for the high school humanities program.

Event 8.

Establishing study groups on longer school year and new K-12 functions.

Scene.

It is now the spring of 1993. Dr. Wright is pleased with how well things are progressing under the intitial charters — the primary education and the humanities charters. Teachers on the charter teams as well as those not yet teaching under charters sense that a new attitude and spirit emerges when teachers realize they have responsibility as well as control over what and how they teach. "Education by Charter" is turning out to be much more than some gimmick dreamed up by the superintendent to motivate teachers to work harder.

A total of twelve educational charters have now been granted. Charters are now operational in all buildings; several charters are functioning in two buildings. Five more groups of teachers have been given charter planning funds. Dr. Wright expects that at least four of these groups will be granted charters to start in September, 1993.

It's becoming increasingly evident that some changes and additions have to be made in the superintendent's K-12 staff functions. As presently structured, "Curriculum," "Personnel," "Pupil Personnel Services," and the "Business Office" are not able to provide teachers with the kind of support they need to carry out their responsibilities under educational charters.

And there's another development that may help the Hometown Public Schools move more quickly in accomplishing two intertwined goals in the ten-year plan: having a longer school year for pupils and making teaching a full year job. During the past four years, problems within the national economy have worsened: competition with countries who have lower paid labor forces has intensified; robotics and other technology has further decreased the number of manufacturing jobs; and the national rate of unemployment has risen to 12%.

Amerca's need for a more literate and more highly trained labor force was an important issue debated in the 1992 election campaign. The candidate who subsequently won the election took a strong position that America could no longer afford a part-time school year for its children. In late November, the person heading the new administration's transition team for educational affairs announced that there would be a request for about $300,000 of planning money which would be given to twenty selected school districts which would be willing to develop models for 200+ day school years. Upon approval of plans, larger amounts of money would be made available to those districts over a five-year period to help them to actually move to longer school years. It is hoped that these models, then, would be replicated throughout the country. The national goal being set was that all schools would be on a 200+ day school year by the year 2000.

Dr. Wright decided to use $2,000 of $6,000 allocated for K-12 function planning this year to support a two-day "Hometown Education Retreat." The pupose of the retreat would be to study how to reorganize his staff functions and to see if some progress could be made in resolving the many sensitive issues involved in lengthening the school year. Since nearly half of the teachers of Hometown were already working three or more weeks beyond the present school year, Dr. Wright thought it just might be possible to achieve the full work year for teachers as well as lengthen the school year for pupils.

Participants in the retreat included: all principals; those presently heading K-12 functions; several members of the school board who had expressed interest; the Executive Committee of the Hometown Teachers Association; chairpersons from charter teams that had been operating at least a year; parents who had been active on charter planning or advisory groups; and a number of business leaders. The principals had been given the responsibility of organizing the retreat. Manfred Johnson, the high school principal, was designated as the person to facilitate the discussions and activities of the retreat.

At the concluding session on Thursday night (first week in April, 1993), Mr. Johnson summarizes the recommendations of the various discussion groups formed to explore all the issues listed at the start of the retreat the previous day.

This has been a busy two days for us. Representatives from all the discussion groups had dinner together this evening to see is there was any "common sense" with regard to areas in which we needed to establish study groups. Others around this table can check me to see if I have captured the gist of everyone's thinking.

First of all, there are some things that would relate to all of the study groups we would set up.

- *Applying for planning funds.* There is a great deal of work to be done by each of the study groups: considerable staff work will be involved; consultants to consult with; reports to write and type and distribute, etc. This is not going to be done as a volunteer effort. We will be applying for the "200+ Day School Year Planning Project" funds. If successful, this would give us $12,000 in addition to the $4,000 we already have in our budget.
- *Having a good mix of people on each study group.* As you will hear, most of our study areas will be identified rather simply by a role or viewpoint like "pupils", "teachers", "parents", etc. In each study group, we would like the same kind of mix as we had in our discussion groups these past two days. Oh — another thought that was expressed at dinner this evening — what a splendid opportunity we have here to involve some of our high school students. We think their participation would enrich our deliberations as well as be a good experience for them.
- *Identifying K-12 functions to support Education by Charter.* It's been four years since Dr. Wright introduced us to Education by Charter. I can remember some of our early reservations, but it's interesting to note that there hasn't been any suggestion or even a hint that we ought to abandon educational charters and return to what we had before. Given the fact that Education by Charter is working reasonably

well, each study group needs to address the question: "What K-12 functions or what kinds of services are needed to make Education by Charter even better?"

- *Planning and implementing a 200+ day school year for pupils and a full work year for teachers.* Rather than set up a separate study group for these topics, we would like to have each study group designate one person — preferably somebody with a passion for playing around with time blocks and calendars — to be part of a "200+ School Day Committee" which will try to create this longer school year for all of us to look at. I suggest that Dr. Wright and the chairperson of the school board co-chair this committee.
- *Reporting to the community during American Education Week in early November.* This will give us about five or six months to work and another month for preparing a printed report for the citizens of Hometown. This timing would allow for including funds for reorganized K-12 functions in the 1994-1995 budget. The new functions and services, then, could begin July 1, 1994. We would also know by that time whether we would have a reasonable chance for the operational funds for moving into the longer school year starting in 1995-1996.

Areas for study

There are a number of things each study group will have to do: to decide whether or not a K-12 function is needed; to name the function; to indicate if it is a staff function under the superintendent or if it is advisory in nature; to list the major objectives of the function; to examine the consequences for the function if a 200+ day school year is adopted; and to estimate the annual budget cost.

The "200+ Day School Year Committee" will be composed of one representative from each study group. Its mission will be to design the extended school year for pupils and the full work year for professional staff. The committee would also propose a timetable and cost estimates for moving in that direction.

Here then are the eight study areas:

1. *Program monitoring and evaluation.* Under Dr. Slesher's leadership, Program Monitoring and Evaluation (Stage 5 in the life of an educational charter) has already developed into an ongoing K-12 function. How well has the "inside-outside" concept worked? Has program monitoring and evaluation been a positive force in insuring that charter teams meet their objectives? Are there any changes which could be made to improve this function?
2. *Fields of knowledge and major curriculum categories.* With few exceptions, educational charters are functioning within the traditional categories of school curriculum. Should we consider a different kind of "big picture" in light of the continuing break-up and reorganization of the disciplines at the university and research levels? How can we take advantage of the new ways to both access and build data bases? How can we go beyond the mundane, overgeneralized, pablum level of texts and materials now being provided by commercial publishers? Where do the classroom library, the school and community libraries, and media centers fit into the learning systems of the next century?
3. *Pupils.* Can we do more in shaping lessons to individual learning styles? What ever happened to Dr. Wright's recommendation that every child should have an individual educational plan? Are the pupils in educational charters developing independence in learning and starting to acquire lifelong learning skills and

attitudes? How are the results of state-mandated tests being used? Do we have strong enough ties with human services and law enforcement agencies? Have special needs pupils been adequately served under educational charters?

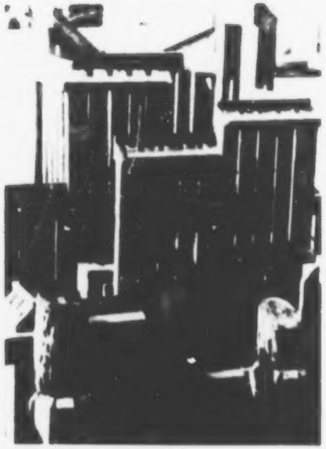
4. *Teachers and other professional staff.* Do we need something beyond our present "Personnel Department?" If we move to an extended school year, how can we insure that sufficient time is allowed in a full work year for career development and inservice activities? Should we publicize our success stories on how, under educational charters, teachers are directly linking career building with curriculum and program needs? With teachers having been given real control over instruction, can we not reduce the number of regulations about "conditions of work" now in the collective bargaining contract? What are the pros and cons of the entire professional staff working the full year? Should teachers who want their summers off still have this as an option?
5. *Ethos of the individual school.* Has staff morale and school climate suffered or been enhanced by virtue of more than half the staff being teachers under educational charters? Is a new role emerging for the principal? If so, what is it? Can the organizational and administrative skills of the principals be used in any of the K-12 functions?
6. *Parents and other citizens.* Has there been genuine and substantial participation by parents and other citizens on Charter Planning Teams and Charter Advisory Committees? Why haven't the Hometown Public Schools moved more quickly toward individual plans for learning for each child? What role should parents play in all this push for "independent learning projects"? Are parents and others in the community less likely to be considered "outsiders" by teachers on charter teams? Is the lifelong learning concept applicable to adults? How can families take vacations if the children are going to school all of the time?
7. *Town and area employers.* During the past four years, the Hometown Public Schools and the local area Chamber of Commerce have been successful in establishing a number of partnership programs. In a new kind of longer school year, is there any way in which older high school students could be released for work during the fall? How would a longer school year affect vacation scheduling for workers and their families? Can we find more ways to provide at-risk students with supervised work experiences? How can we create a more even, long-term relationship between schools and the business community?
8. *Business Department.* Having developed a working multi-year, budgeting/accounting system as a financial base for educational charters, what more needs to be done? Should the business office be more of a development office like colleges have and be more aggressive in finding additional sources of revenue? Would it be cost effective to go in with other schools in purchasing supplies and equipment? How can the buildings be cleaned and maintained if we have school all year?

Well, there you have it — our summary of what we have been doing the past two days. Are there any questions?

There were several questions — one particularly difficult one. Was it appropriate for the study group on personnel to get into anything having to do with the "conditions of work" in the collective bargaining agreement? After some intense discussion, it was decided that it was not appropriate for the study group to get into this. The negotiating teams of the teachers association and the school board were aware of what was happening with regard to reorganizing the school district and moving toward a full work year. It would only be natural that they would take these developments into account in future negotiating sessions. At the end of the discussion period, Mr. Johnson has a final request of those participating in the retreat.

One other thing before we leave this evening. We need people to work on these eight study groups. We hope that many of you who have helped work out this next step for our schools will be willing to be involved with a study group. And perhaps you can suggest others who are not here who might be interested and would have a contribution to make.

Sufficient consultant and staff support will be given to each group. We can assure you that you will be given "thinking time" and, most importantly, you will be helping shape the future of of education in Hometown.



Event 9.

Recommendations for reorganized K-12 functions and new "Septuple School/Work Year."

Scene.

The study groups were organized during the second and third weeks of April, 1993. Most groups were able to have two or three meetings before the end of school; but it was during the half-day sessions in late June when most of the work was done. The initial drafts of recommendations were completed by July 4.

These initial drafts were helpful to the representatives designated by each study group to serve on the "200+ School Day Committee" which did its work in late August and early September. A single proposal for a "Septuple School/Work Year" was taken back to the eight study groups which reviewed it as well as used it to make adjustments in their own recommendations.

The final report was sent to the printers in early October. Dr. Wright scheduled its release to the public at the final event of "Hometown American Education Week" during the second week in November.

Over 800 people gathered in the ballroom of the Hometown Sheraton for the Friday evening banquet: all employees of the school district, members of the school board, the entire Chamber of Commerce, several hundred parents and other citizens of the community, and the fifteen high school students who worked on the study groups.

The report has been distributed. Manfred Johnson, high school principal, will be "walking" people through the various sections of the report.

I feel very humble up here behind the podium introducing a blueprint for education that so many of you out there in the audience had a part in creating. More than 200 of you (not counting the employees of the Hometown Public Schools) have been or are on charter planning teams and charter advisory committees. About 100 of us have worked rather intensively together on study groups since last April. And here's our report to the community — a report of our recent accomplishments as well as our future vision: "ORGANIZING THE HOMETOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOR EDUCATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY."

Let's walk through this together. Dr. Wright has provided us with a philosophic statement for the introduction. In Chapter 1 you find the latest revision of the ten-year plan. A history and detailed description of educational charters makes up Chapter 2. Included in Chapter 2 is a directory of all persons who are involved in operating charters as well as a list of everyone on charter planning teams. There is also a listing of educational charters by schools and general subject areas.

We'll spend most of our time this evening going over the material in the last three chapters. The proposed reorganized K-12 functions are described in Chapter 3. Dr. Wright wrote Chapter 4 on Communications and Responsibilities in which he has provided us with a new organizational chart for the school district. He has a rather unique plan for staffing these functions. Chapter 5 contains what is probably the most interesting part of the report — a description of a new kind of school year, the "Septuple School Year."

I will give a brief description of the reorganized K-12 functions and services. Dr. Wright will explain the new organizational chart as well as provide a plan for staffing the K-12 functions and services. Ms. Marlene Moore, chairperson of the school board, will go over the details of the proposed new school year.

Reorganized K-12 functions/services

Those of us on the different study groups were amazed at the various combinations of K-12 functions we could come up with once we were able to break out of our old categories of "curriculum," "personnel," "pupil personnel services," and the "business office."

For the ten-year period starting next fall, we are recommending nine K-12 functions/services. The first four are traditional staff functions, organized in much the same manner as are our present functions. The next three are cooperative functions, each of which will be funded jointly by the school board and another organization. The eighth function, Program Monitoring and Evaluation (already in place), will be funded by the school board and will continue to function in a semi-independent fashion. The ninth function is a kind of hidden function — it doesn't even appear on the organizational chart. Perhaps "integrated" is a better word than hidden. This will be a collaborative-type function, with the initial leadership coming from the principals and the superintendent.

1. RESOURCES FOR EDUCATION. Among the major responsibilities to be carried out by the staff of this function are: multi-year program budgeting; payroll and benefits; personnel files and records; negotiations with employee groups; buildings and grounds maintenance; securing and helping others to secure funds, tapping a variety of sources; purchasing and monitoring expenditures; completing all state, federal, and other financial reports; and publishing instructional materials and curriculum guides as requested by teachers.

A complete word processing center as well as a franchise of "Speedy Copy and Print Shop (with Three Color Capability)" will be housed right in the new administrative wing which is now being added to the middle school.

2. KNOWLEDGE AND CURRICULUM. It is within this function that we will continue to struggle with the changes going on in the disciplinary fields and see if we can narrow the gap between the frontiers of research and the classroom. We see no reason why today's pupils should be educated on a knowledge base that is at least twenty years old.

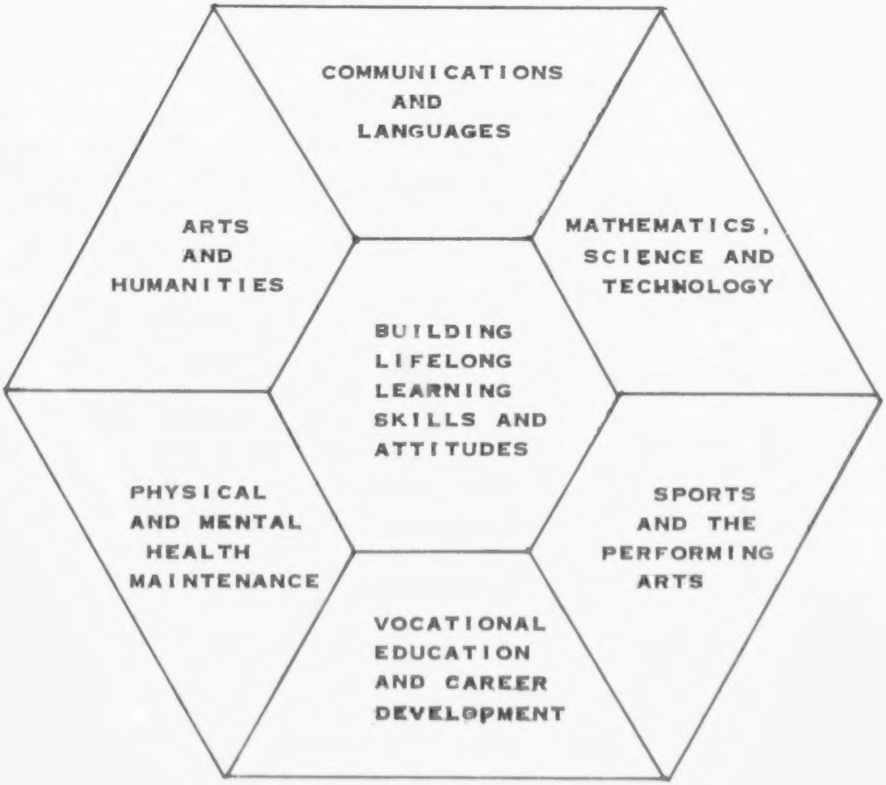
This was the study group of which I was a member. We did come up with an overall structure for curriculum from the middle school through adult education. Note Figure 6 in the report: "THE HEXAGON OF KNOWLEDGE FOR PERSONS AGE 10 AND OLDER." Educational charters can be granted within one of these large categories or across two or more categories.

Under this function, teachers would receive help in planning and implementing curriculum — right down to the daily lesson-plan level if this is needed. The establishment and maintenance of professional libraries and materials in each building will be a responsibility of the staff of this function.

3. MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY CENTER. Obviously this is the function which would provide help for use of the computer, data bases, modums, etc. While this sounds like a good modern function for any school district to have,

Figure 6. The Hexagon of Knowledge for Persons Age 10 and Older -

Curriculum Structure for the Hometown Public Schools 1995-2005


COMMUNICATIONS AND LANGUAGES
ARTS AND HUMANITIES
MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
BUILDING LIFELONG LEARNING SKILLS AND ATTITUDES
PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH MAINTENANCE
SPORTS AND THE PERFORMING ARTS
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

we almost tore ourselves apart trying to figure out just where this fits into the school district organization.

Initially we had this combined with Function 2 into "KMTC" standing for knowledge, media, technology, and communications. And when we split them apart, we didn't know what to do with school libraries. Were libraries for students linked closely with "knowledge" or were they really "data bases?"

Many of our problems were resolved when someone found an old issue (April, 1987) of *The School Administrator*. In it Lewis Rhodes had an article entitled "Introducing Technology to Schools — New Tools Make Old Tasks Easy, New Ones Exciting." Dr. Rhodes noted that during the last half century we may have been using some technology but that this really didn't make very much difference. But this time the technological revolution is a real revolution — it's not a fad, it's here to stay, and it isn't going to go away.

> As far as society is concerned, the technology revolution is not a fad. Actually, we're in the first stage of an evolution. This can be accelerated by what we learn and do today, but it can't be stopped.
>
> The process of problem solving with technology must be seen as a continuing activity, a way to continue exploring, learning, applying lessons learned, and making new discoveries as your uses of technology continue to expand potential limits. Support for this continuing process in the building means regular opportunities to focus on problems, exchange thoughts about what's being learned to deal with them, and plan new strategies. Document this periodic reflection so that what is being learned can be shared with others as well as built on in future cycles. This documentation can provide the substance to feed a variety of networks among buildings and districts. . .
>
> Through strategic processes like this one, technology can: empower individuals increasingly frustrated by their lack of control over their own job destinies; connect peers for problem-solving exchanges; provide access to information and other resources at the point and time it's needed; and facilitate tradeoffs on the non-human variables in schooling to make better use of the unique attributes of human beings.
>
> Once introduced in this role, technology is here to stay; and, more importantly, it will bring with it effective applications to enhance student learning.[28]

4. STUDENT LEARNING AND CAREER SERVICES. First of all, this will be the umbrella for many programs and services now under the directors of pupil personnel and special education services: special education and Chapter I classes; speech, remedial reading, and psychological services; personal, vocational, and college counseling; and assessments and testing.

Many of these programs and services have had a "deficit" connotation — something had to be missing or wrong or a student had to be subnormal or abnormal before services would be available to the student. I think we need to turn this around and place these traditional services in a larger, and more positive, context.

If we are now in the "Information Age," then this K-12 function can support teachers in fulfilling their responsibility of helping students acquire the attitudes and skills for lifelong learning. All children — not just those with special needs — should have an "IEP," an Individual Educational Plan within which they and their parents can participate in determining the objectives and means of students' education.

I would like to take a moment for a related aside. We have to be careful when we talk about how we become able to have students accept responsibility for their own learning. There's no automatic triggering of student motivation simply by giving teachers the responsibility and then saying to them, "We've given you responsibility for and control over instruction; now it's up to you to help (make) students take responsiblity for and control over their own learning."

Nor does setting up STUDENT LEARNING AND CAREER SERVICES automatically guarantee that six months from now all or most students will become avid learners. But let me give you one example of a change that is a good start on solving the problem of student passivity.

During the past three years, teachers in a number of charters have been field testing the "A-B-I Report Card." The field test has met with such enthusiastic response by teachers, students, and parents that we are encouraging all renewals as well as new charters to incorporate this feature.

What is the A-B-I report card and how does it work to place responsibility on students? In our present system, many able students are willing to settle for a "C" because they do not want to put forth the effort to get a higher grade. The present system has a disastrous impact on the at-risk (potential dropout) student who over a period of years, starting in elementary school, may receive a whole string of report cards with "D's" and "F's" being the predominate grades. The school does a good job in labeling this student as a failure and before long the student becomes convinced that this is true.

In the A-B-I grading system, a teacher responds only when a student produces "A" or "B" level work. The response to failing or incomplete work is a wise balance between silence and an "I" for incomplete — always providing an explanation to the student of what needs to be done to achieve a "B" or an "A." A whole new set of behaviors comes into play once the A-B-I report card system is put into place — different behaviors on the part of teachers as well as different behaviors by students and their parents. Once this change becomes universally adopted, we think we will have made progress in changing students' traditionally passive attitude toward learning.

Now to get back to the K-12 staff functions. The first four of these — resource support, curriculum planning, media and technology, and student learning and career services — are traditional staff functions in a direct line of responsibility from the school board to the superintendent to the principals.

The next three K-12 functions will still interact with and provide services to staff in educational charters; however, we are calling them "cooperative functions" as the staff of each is jointly funded by the Hometown School Board and another organization.

5. EDUCATORS CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER. Along with recognizing that teachers must be responsible for and have control over instruction, it only follows that the Hometown Teachers Association has a responsibility for and should share in the control over career development and inservice education activities of its members. It also must be recognized that it is of great importance to the school board and community that these profession-building activities be directly connected to the curriculum and services needs of the school district. Thus, the rationale for 40% funding by the teachers association and 60% funding by the school board. It will be the responsibility of the staff of the center to help professionals apply for state, federal, and private funding to support workshops and other professional activities.

The school board increased its contribution from 50% to 60% so that administrators and specialists could be included in the group served by the center.

It's interesting to note that the EDUCATORS CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER is the adult counterpart to STUDENT LEARNING AND CAREER SERVICES.

6. SCHOOL-BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS. This is only a temporary name for this function and really doesn't represent what we see developing over the long run.

The schools of the county have been invited to become charter members of a new County Manpower Development Commission whose main purpose will be to tie more closely together the vocational programs of the schools with the present and future manpower needs of both the public and private sectors of the county. School-business partnerships will be encouraged; present trade advisory groups will be strengthened; and public and private financing will be sought.

The operating and overhead costs of the commission will be shared equally (25% each) by the schools, the chambers of commerce, the labor unions, and the state.

7. CITIZENS EDUCATION COUNCIL. I encourage you to read pages 115 to 120 in your report. Here you'll find a strongly worded statement by those who worked on the study group, Parents and Other Citizens.

This group did a detailed questionnaire/ interview study of all parents who had participated on charter planning teams and charter advisory committees during the past three years.

While the total number of parent participants seemed to be impressive, 131 in all, their responses as to whether or not they felt like *genuine* participants were less than enthusiastic. They felt like there had been a lot of rhetoric about parents finally being given a real part in the educational process — but this simply hasn't happened, at least not yet. Parents wondered about teachers wanting to work a full "professional year" when 90% of the meetings of these groups were held during "school hours." Were not teachers aware that in most families in the mid-1990's both parents work, and, if they were willing to give up their precious evening time, why couldn't teachers do the same?

And there's another "piece of rhetoric" that parents wondered about — the promise that each child, not just the handicapped child — *each* child would have an "IEP," an Individual Educational Plan. This was to enable parents to participate in setting the goals and determining the methods and strategies for their child's education. Progress on this promise has been moving at a snail's pace.

After summarizing the results of the questionnaires and interviews, the study group then determined that there were at least three other areas of responsibilities which could be placed with a K-12 parents-citizens function.

First of all, if the new longer school year for pupils is adopted, there are a whole host of questions that this would raise for families:

- How would family vacations be handled if the only vacation weeks given working parents occurred when school was in session?
- Can guides be developed which would help parents become effective teachers during vacations?
- Could school credit be earned on vacation trips if a project were developed and approved prior to the start of vacation?
- And how about summer camps? If all the country's schools adopt a longer school year, won't we be losing a valuable recreational and educational resource if summer camps go out of business? Why not grant school credit for experiences such as: Taking tennis or swimming lessons from a real "pro?" Losing weight in a controlled environment? Learning to use a computer at summer camp? Summer camps have become highly specialized and often the expertise of the uncertified teacher or counselor exceeds that of the certified teacher in school.

This function could provide the forum for working out many of the problems and frustrations of families as well as help families see the opportunities which would open up with a longer school year.

A second additional responsibility would be to establish and maintain a computer-based community resources data bank. We already have a start with our Hometown Volunteers/Resources Committee which began last year. But with just modest financing from the school board, this could become an even more used resource by teachers as they plan and implement charters.

The third additional responsibility might be to be in charge of adult education for the Hometown Public Schools. Adult education has never thrived in Hometown — and we have some truly rich educational facilities which are under utilized nights and Saturdays. Placing the responsiblity for adult education directly on the shoulders of those who might want to participate might just turn this around.

Organizationally, parents feel like they've had enough of the PTA's, the PTO's, and the PTS's. They want the structure of this function separate from the school district. They plan to form a nonprofit corporation for parents and other citizens who are interested in accomplishing these purposes. The name proposed: "CITIZENS EDUCATION COUNCIL, INC." Inasmuch as the council will be performing services for teachers as well as the community, the school board has tentatively agreed to fund 60% of the administrative and overhead costs. The council will raise the remaining 40% themselves. In addition, there will be receipts coming in from adult education classes and other activities of the council.

8. PROGRAM MONITORING AND EVALUATION. No one would have dreamed that this K-12 function would have been as effective and well accepted as it has been. We think this has been due, in large measure, to Dr. Robert Slescher's ability to personify the "semi-independent" status necessary for this kind of service. His skill in being able to form monitoring and evaluation teams with in-depth expertise from many fields of endeavor, and from Hometown staff as well as staff from other school districts — this has been truly phenomenal.

Dr. Slescher has indicated that he wants to see the ten-year plan through to its conclusion. This means he will be with us another two years. By that time, we hope that technology will be sufficiently advanced that he will be able to provide us with a clone of himself to be responsible for this crucial and critical function!

9. EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PROFESSION. This, then, is the "hidden K-12 function." But it's only hidden in that it is not shown on the organizational chart. We want to see this function integrated into, intertwined with, every charter, every K-12 function, and every service in the school district.

Many of us here today were present at a meeting five years ago at which time Dr. Wright shared his views on how educational research needed to be solidly based in the school district. (I believe he made the speech prior to his being employed as superintendent.) Well, now we have the opportunity to see if we can do this.

We see at least four levels of educational research/professional contributions which could spring out of/or be fuzed into school district needs. And activities at all four levels would be linking teachers' and administrators' long-term career plans with school district needs and problems. The fourth level, in particular, fits in with our mission to help pupils become independent, lifelong learners.

1. Doctoral and masters levels research focusing on topics and situations which are in need of scholarly study.
2. Classroom action research projects set up with resources provided to educational charters. These would be highly specific projects: "Let's try this for three months and observe what happens" kind of projects which would probably be started and completed within one school year.
3. Contributions to the profession would include such activities as: writing for educational and subject field journals; authoring instructional materials which may be used in other school districts as well as in Hometown; creating video and multi-media presentations; and preparing and delivering an address presentation at a state or national meeting.
4. Providing leadership and support for individual or small groups of students involved in research-type independent study projects.

At all four levels, the products would hopefully help solve or provide additional data about a school district or curriculum problem *and* have some usefulness outside the school district.

There are no plans to employ a director or set up an office for this function. Rather, initially at least, the superintendent and principals (as part of their responsibility for supporting and improving instruction) will provide the leadership. They will meet with individual and small groups of teachers and other professionals. Products coming out of these efforts will be publicized within as well as outside the school district.

Well, . .there are the nine new or reorganized K-12 functions. Thank you for your patience. Now I'd like to turn the mike over to Dr. Wright who will help us see how these functions can be tied together in a new "wrap-around" organizational chart of the Hometown Public Schools.

New Organizational Chart

Thank you, Manfred. Tying all this together into an organizational chart didn't come easily. As we worked through the spring and into the summer, it seemed like our study groups were going off in too many directions. I didn't see how anyone would be able to capture our new structure on paper in a way that would make sense to any of us.

I started getting cold feet about Labor Day. There were only four weeks left before the deadline for submitting the final copy of our report to the printer. And still, no visual concept had surfaced — at least not to me. So I decided to invite the principals, the study group chairpersons, and anyone else who had a passion for drawing charts to my home for an evening to simply "do it!"

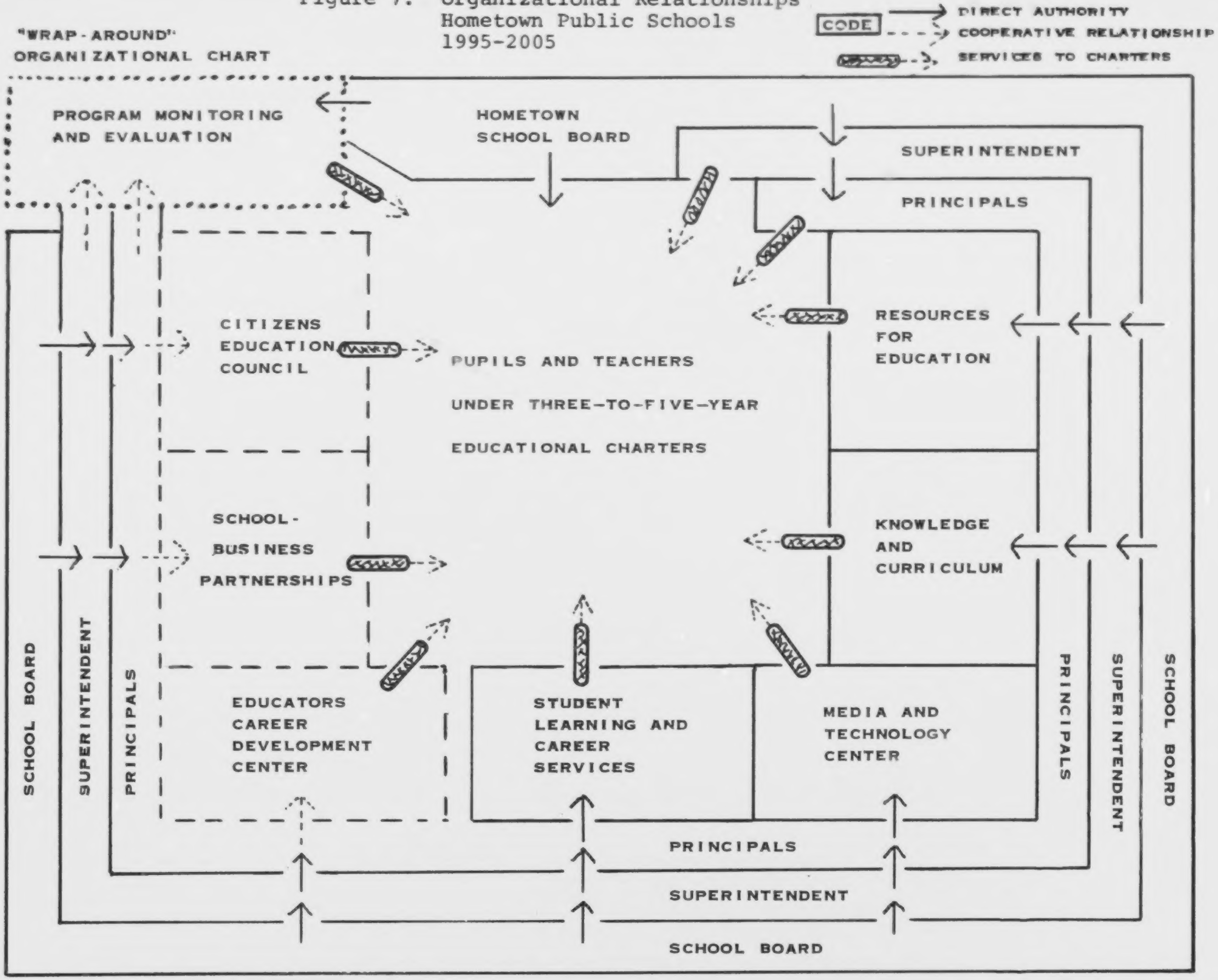
With the help of several gallons of coffee, we finally came up with the first draft of what ultimately became Figure 7, ORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS — HOMETOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS. Let me point out the features of this proposed organization.

1. Pupils and teachers via the vehicle of educational charters are at the center of this organizational chart rather than being at the bottom as is the case on most school district organizational charts. This is as it should be. Learning and teaching are why we're in business — we should be able to express visually what we want in reality.
2. The solid arrows indicate direct control as well as a flow of resources from the school board, i.e., a solid arrow indicates that the school board has direct control over teachers and other staff through charter agreements. The solid arrow also indicates that it funds the educational programs and services of charters directly.
3. Note also the solid arrows from the board through the superintendent and principals to the staff of the first four functions starting at the upper right. These are the superintendent's regular staff functions, organizationally similar to present K-12 functions.
4. The dotted arrows indicate cooperative relationships between the school board and other organizations and partial funding of these organizations by the school board, the organizations being the Hometown Teachers Association, the County Manpower Development Commission, and the Citizens Education Council, Inc.
5. The solid arrow from the board to PROGRAM MONITORING AND EVALUATION indicates full funding of this function even though the staff of this function operates in a semi-independent fashion.
6. The "sausage-shaped" symbols with dotted arrows indicate "providing services for" and "interacting with" teachers working in educational charters. (One person said this symbol looked much more like a lighted firecracker than a sausage!)
7. Our hidden K-12 function, EDUCATIIONAL RESEARCH AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PROFESSION, obviously does not appear on the chart as we see this activity happening in any box or within any role on the wrap-around organizational chart.

There's one other dimension we tried to show on the chart — but it would have made it too confusing. (Perhaps we need a second chart.) Organizationally speaking, each of the K-12 functions "sits on the boundary" between the school district and institutions, agencies and other entities in its environment. The K-12 functions are windows to, and connections with, the outside world.

The K-12 functions perform this very necessary role of bringing into the school district intellectual, people, and money resources from the outside, i.e., RESOURCES FOR EDUCATION is the funnel for money from a number of sources as well as being connected with the business world and the printing and graphic arts industry; KNOWLEDGE AND CURRICULUM has deep roots in the discipline of epistemology; the STUDENT LEARNING AND CAREER CENTER draws on the many sub-fields of psychology, including the emerging psycho-neurosciences, etc.

Figure 7. Organizational Relationships
Hometown Public Schools
1995-2005


"WRAP-AROUND" ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
CODE
DIRECT AUTHORITY
COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIP
SERVICES TO CHARTERS
PROGRAM MONITORING AND EVALUATION
HOMETOWN SCHOOL BOARD
SUPERINTENDENT
PRINCIPALS
CITIZENS EDUCATION COUNCIL
PUPILS AND TEACHERS
UNDER THREE-TO-FIVE-YEAR
EDUCATIONAL CHARTERS
RESOURCES FOR EDUCATION
SCHOOL-BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS
KNOWLEDGE AND CURRICULUM
SCHOOL BOARD
SUPERINTENDENT
PRINCIPALS
EDUCATORS CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER
STUDENT LEARNING AND CAREER SERVICES
MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY CENTER
PRINCIPALS
SUPERINTENDENT
SCHOOL BOARD
PRINCIPALS
SUPERINTENDENT
SCHOOL BOARD

Plan for staffing K-12 functions

Let me close with our plan for staffing the K-12 functions. This will lead right into Ms. Moore's proposal for the longer school year.

The longer school year for pupils will help us go most of the way toward a full work year for teachers. Should teachers be expected to teach pupils 200, 210, perhaps 220 days a year? Some of us might thrive on this but most teachers, I think, would want some other professional assignment for part of the time.

With the introduction of educational charters, teachers have assumed many professional level, non-teaching tasks, such as: doing staff work for the charter team; creating text and reference materials from original sources; taking courses and workshops to keep up with a changing field; etc.

Using teachers to staff the K-12 functions will enable us to virtually multiply the number of high level, professional, non-classroom responsiblities teachers can assume. We will still need permanent secretaries and other support staff as we do now. And we will have an occasional need for the high level of expertise of persons who are not certified as teachers such as a consultant psychiatrist or a maintenance technician for our expanding computer systems. But with the exception of the persons in charge of the CITIZENS EDUCATIONAL COUNCIL and PROGRAM MONITORING AND EVALUATION, all administrative and professional level responsibilities will be filled by Hometown teachers.

What an exciting opportunity we have! Our 238 teachers in Hometown are a very diverse group with an almost limitless variety of talents and skills. And I think we can fit this variety of talents and skills into the qualifications of persons needed to keep the K-12 functions alive and healthy. There's a basic question here — and I can see some of you ready to ask it: How do we keep good services coming from these functions with people rotating in and out of these positions all of the time?

Well, here's another place where we mesh together teachers' long-term career plans with the ongoing needs of the school district. And, of course, we have to balance the pace of rotation through positions with the need for stability in providing services.

- Arbitrary limits need to be placed on the length of time a person can fill any non-teaching professional role: superintendent, ten years with no renewal; principal, seven years with the option to reapply for a second seven-year term after a year or more of classroom teaching; assistant principal, three years with no renewal; assistant superintendents, directors and professional positions within functions, three to five years with no repeating in the same position.
- Teachers must be duly accredited and/or otherwise qualified before they would be placed in any non-teaching leadership responsiblity.
- When necessary and within the designated time frame, a teacher might intern for a term or part of a term under the teacher who would be leaving the position.
- In some instances, a person might teach part-time and hold a non-teaching position the rest of the time.
- A teacher leaving a counseling, specialist, or administrative position would simply rotate back into teaching. If possible, this would occur at the time a new charter was being planned or an existing charter was being renewed.

Our last K-12 director, Mr. Knowles who was a very able business manager for 35 years, retired last year. He has not been replaced. I think we have a number of good teachers who have the qualifications for this position — and would enjoy the change for three or four years. We can make this work providing everyone is on the same salary schedule. We would continue to grant steps for years of experience and stipends for advanced degrees. In addition, people would be paid for the amount of time they worked during the year — as you will hear from Ms. Moore, this will vary considerably for some time to come. We need to work toward a situation where a teacher can rotate into an administrative position and back to teaching with no loss of compensation. (The principals have recommended that they be given bonuses each year for "hazardous duty!")

Let me mention a serendipity in all this. A teacher aspiring to be a full-time administrator usually has a great deal of difficulty moving from the ranks of teaching into administration. Having the opportunity to be an assistant principal for three years or an assistant superintendent for five years would give that person a strong advantage in applying for an administrative position in another school district. It's not that we want to lose good people, but if a person has set as a career goal that of becoming a permanent administrator, we can help that person fulfill that goal and also achieve a healthy rate of attrition and replacement for the Hometown Public Schools.

Well, I guess I got a bit off the organizational chart! But our being able to provide exciting and challenging non-classroom options for teachers as a part of their long-term career plans is an important ingredient in our moving toward a longer school year for pupils and a full work year for teachers. . . So, Ms. Moore, tell us what this "Septuple School Calendar" is all about. . .

The "Septuple School Calendar"

Thank you, Dr. Wright, I'm the lucky one on this panel as I can share with you the only true surprise of the evening. As this was the last major task completed — working out a proposal for a new school year — we decided against sending up any trial balloons and thought it would be better and more appropriate to present our plan to the community this evening.

Our "Longer School Year Study Group"came together after all the other study groups completed their work. The group included a chairperson or representative from each study group and any other member of any study group who was particularly intrigued with working on this most difficult problem.

Considerations in planning new school year

We started off with this basic premise: this new school year had to be an *American* school year, grounded in and formed out of the dynamics of American culture at the turn of a new century. It simply would not work to just adapt a British school year or a Japanese school year or a Russian school year.

First of all, we didn't think Hometown families would want to send their children to school on Saturday. This is one way many countries are able to achieve their longer school year. In fact, in our study of the problem, we learned that a number of countries of eastern Europe (including a republic of the USSR, Latvia) are discontinuing school on Saturday as the workplace adopts a five-day work week. This results in their actually shortening their school years! Their rationale for this is that no school on Saturday means many more hours of family time. This increase in time for families to be together will bring more stability for families and this benefit to society will more than offset any loss in education.

Our present school year has for its rationale the need for farm families to have their children free to work during planting, growing, and harvesting seasons. This is no longer a viable rationale as fewer than 3% of Americans now live on farms.

What then is the rationale for a new longer *American* school year? After only a short discussion, we agreed on what seems very obvious to us now: Americans love holidays and the long weekends which frequently go along with holidays! Why not use holidays for beginning, ending, and/or breaking points for the various segments of the school year?

We also wanted to do something about the long stretches of school and vacation times we had in our present year. The fall semester isn't bad — with numerous breaks for Columbus Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Years Day, and Martin Luther King Day. But the stretch of time after that seems intolerably long. And we tend to grind ourselves down by early May and we all kind of, psychologically at least, throw in the towel and look for things to start afresh again in September.

And have you ever noticed how children start hanging around school buildings about the second week in August? They want to know who their new teachers are going to be and what their new rooms look like. Many (not all) by then are tired of the long summer vacation. They have done everything there is to do and they're ready for the new school year to begin. (Have to be careful not to generalize here!)

The parents in our group were adament in doing away with "Curriculum Days," "Parent-Teacher Conference Days," and any other form of "Release Day" or "Release Half Day." Every time school closes for these types of activities, families by the hundreds have to scurry around to make some kind of temporary arrangement for childcare or turn their children into "latchkey kids" for the day.

Parents did concede, however, that they would have to make childcare accommodations for snow days and other emergency conditions. And on a related point, none of us thought it made much sense to add on school days in June should the number of emergency days exceed the limit set by the state.

Along with devising the new school year, we knew we would have to come up with a different credit system for the high school if the Carnegie Unit did not fit our use of time in the new school year.

And finally, we wanted a truly significant increase in the number of days school would be in session — just adding five or ten days would not do. We wanted a new school year with more than 200 days of class, possibly 210 or 220 days of class.

With these considerations in mind, we set out on our task. We were especially interested in figuring out a school year which was built around the base 10. But base 10 didn't take us anywhere: we were trying to get away from our present 90-day semesters; 80-day terms wouldn't give us enough days; and 100-day school terms didn't seem to fit anywhere.

Usefulness of Base 7

Just when we seemed to be real stuck, our honors math student, Ricardo Baldez (he had been the student member on the Pupil Study Group), suggested that we try 7 instead of 10 as a base. He had taken the problem home with him and had actually developed a rough plan using seven days instead of ten as the base factor.

Ricardo showed us a diagram of his plan. And then we tested it out with the most difficult kind of year — a year in which July 4 was on a Thursday and Christmas and New Years Day fell on Wednesdays. The year 1996-1997 was such a year. If Ricardo's Base 7 plan fit 1996-1997, then it could be easily adjusted to fit any year.

Sure enough, it worked and we saw that it was not necessary that all terms during the year be of the same length; however, the lengths of terms as well as the parts of each of the terms are all divisible by seven. (See Figure 8d.)

- *July Term.* 21 days long, with possible use of 7- and 14-day blocks of time.
- *August, October, January, and March Terms.* Each 42 days long, with possible use of 7-, 14-, 21-, 28-, and 35-day blocks of time.
- *May Term.* 28 days long, with possible use of 7-, 14-, and 21-day blocks of time.

We suggested that this be called the "Valdez Model," but Ricardo thought it would be more important to emphasize Base 7 and call it the "Septuple School Calendar."

There are a number of other fits that we did not initially set out to achieve:

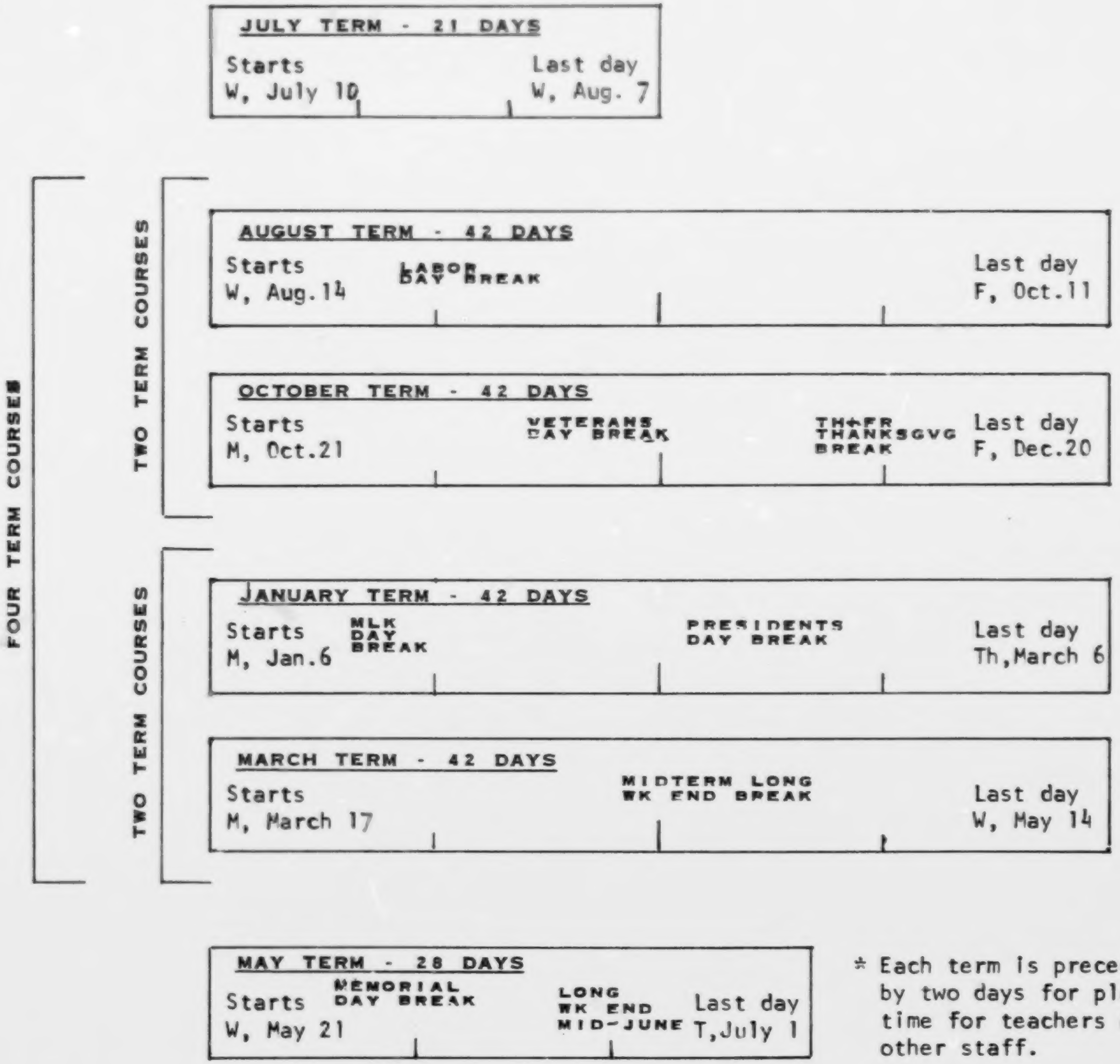
- Except for occasionally ending the May Term on July 1 or July 2, the school year and the fiscal year coincide.
- As noted, the August and October Terms and the January and March Terms combine into nearly the equivalent of present semesters and if added together, come close to being a present total school year.
- The double-term combinations also coincide with the fall and winter terms of all the colleges and universities in the area. This would provide us with a more efficient timeframe within which to grant "half-year" sabbaticals.
- Excess snow days (or other emergency days), could be made up at the end of the October and January terms rather than in June.

Analysis of the use of weekdays

In Figure 9 are the results of our analysis of how all the weekdays between July 1, 1996 and June 30, 1997 would be used under the Septuple School Calendar. There are 217 days on which

Figure 8. Septuple School Calendar - 1996-1997 School Year*

Hometown Public Schools


JULY TERM - 21 DAYS
Starts
W, July 10
Last day
W, Aug. 7
FOUR TERM COURSES
TWO TERM COURSES
AUGUST TERM - 42 DAYS
Starts
W, Aug. 14
LABOR DAY BREAK
Last day
F, Oct. 11
OCTOBER TERM - 42 DAYS
Starts
M, Oct. 21
VETERANS DAY BREAK
TH+FR THANKSGVG BREAK
Last day
F, Dec. 20
TWO TERM COURSES
JANUARY TERM - 42 DAYS
Starts
M, Jan. 6
MLK DAY BREAK
PRESIDENTS DAY BREAK
Last day
Th, March 6
MARCH TERM - 42 DAYS
Starts
M, March 17
MIDTERM LONG WK END BREAK
Last day
W, May 14
MAY TERM - 28 DAYS
Starts
W, May 21
MEMORIAL DAY BREAK
LONG WK END MID-JUNE
Last day
T, July 1

* Each term is preceded by two days for planning time for teachers and other staff.

classes could be in session; however, few students would attend school for every one of those 217 days. For many students, there would be many hours of non-classroom small group and individual study projects. In addition, school credit would be given for activities such as: supervised work experiences; educational experiences in recreational and summer camp programs; and education travel projects undertaken during family time.

The contract year for teachers would increase from 186 to 229 days. And, again, not all teachers would teach 217 days (two days of planning time precede each of the six terms). Note also that teachers would have the equivalent of 22 days of vacation time. This amount exceeds four weeks and is a substantially greater number of days than most of the rest of us have after we've worked ten or fifteen years in business or industry. I'm sure there would be ways to negotiate tradeoffs and leave without pay for teachers who wanted longer or different periods of time for vacation.

Working *toward* a full year for teachers

But wait, don't expect this 229-day work year for teachers yet. As of now, we don't have the funding; however, we do stand a good chance to be designated as one of the twenty school districts in the country to pilot new formats for a longer school year. If we're successful here, we would have considerable financial support for five years.

Some of our veteran teachers who are close to retirement may still want their summers entirely free. That's fine — this will also help us make the transition. And we're not sure the July Term would materialize right away. This means we could go to an interim step of 206 work days for most teachers. The 229-day school year would form the base for the school year for teachers who might be doing staff work for educational charters and for the principals and the superintendent.

Figure 9. Analysis of 261 Weekdays - Fiscal/School Year Starting July 1, 1996 and Ending June 30, 1997

NUMBER OF WEEKDAYS FROM PRE-TERM PLANNING TO START OF NEXT TERM				
SCHOOL TERM	PRE-TERM PLANNING	CLASSES IN SESSION	NATIONAL HOLIDAYS	TEACHERS NOT WORKING
PREVIOUS MAY	0	1* ENDS JULY 1	1 JULY 4	3 JULY 2,3,5
JULY	2 JULY 8,9	21 JULY 10-AUG.7	0	2 AUG.8,9
AUGUST	2 AUG.12,13	42 AUG.14-OCT.11	2 SEPT.2	2 OCT.15,16
OCTOBER	2 OCT.17,18	42 OCT.21-DEC.20	4 NOV.11,28 DEC.25 JAN.1	7 NOV.29 DEC.23,24, 26,27,30,31
JANUARY	2 JAN.2,3	42 JAN.6-MARCH 6	2 JAN.20 FEB.17	4 MARCH 7,10, 11,12
MARCH	2 MMRCH 13,14	42 MARCH 17-MAY 14	0	3 APRIL 14 MAY 15,16
MAY	2 MAY 19,20	27** MAY 21-JULY 1	1 MAY 26	1 JUNE 16
TOTALS	12	217	10	22
GRAND TOTAL = 261 WEEKDAYS				

* Offsets May, 1997 term ending on July 1, 1997

** May Term is actually 28 days long,27 of which are in this fiscal/school year.

Determining graduation credits

The real beauty of Base 7 came through when we saw how it became a base for the "Septuple Credit System." (See Figure 10 in the report.) Notice how multiples of 7 can be translated back into decimals when connected with various numbers of contact hours, all the contact hours being divisible by 7.

Some of us argued for a higher number of "S Units" for graduation; others felt that this would lay too heavy a burden on average students. After all, with most charters now using the A-B-I Report Card, only work of "B" quality or higher would be given credit.

Variety of course/credit combinations

There are many ways in which this time/credit system can be used in planning the time framework for courses and workshops. Some of the combinations are spelled out in Figure 11. Not all of these combinations would be used right away. At the heart of most high school students' school year would be five or six courses a day during the double terms starting in August and January. There would be considerable variety in the different combinations which would be offered during May Term.

As I indicated at the outset, this was the last part of the report completed — and this is your first chance to find out about it. We encourage you to study the plan carefully. We expect that there will be a great deal of discussion about the Septuple School Calendar. Start talking about it in the 45-minute discussion period which Mr. Johnson is going to tell you about. I appreciate the attention you have given to hearing about something very important to all the people of our community.

Figure 10. Septuple Credit System
(210 Contact Hours = 1.0 "S" Unit)

CONTACT HOURS	"S" UNITS	CONTACT HOURS	"S" UNITS
21	.1	252	1.2
42	.2	294	1.4
63	.3	336	1.6
84	.4	378	1.8
105	.5	420	2.0
126	.6	462	2.2
147	.7	504	2.4
168	.8	546	2.6
189	.9	588	2.8
210	1.0	630	3.0

Notes:

1. Full school year for a secondary student: Five one-hour classes for 210 days.
2. High school graduation requirement:

   210 day school year
   × 5 one-hour classes
   × 4 years
   = 4200 hours
   ÷ 210 hours
   = 20 "S" Units

3. "S" Units for approved independent study projects and non-school learning projects determined by above formula plus an adjustment for homework time.

Figure 11. "S" Units of Credit for Various Length Courses During Terms of Different Length

SCHOOL TERM	COURSE OR COURSES			
	HOURS PER DAY	NUMBER OF DAYS	TOTAL HOURS	"S" UNITS
July Term 21 Days	6	7	42	.2
	6	14	84	.4
	3	21	63	.3
Any of the 42-Day Terms	1	21	21	.1
	1	42	42	.2
	2	42	84	.4
	3	42	126	.6
	5	42	210	1.0
Two Consecutive 42-Day Terms	1	84	84	.4
	2	84	168	.8
	3	84	252	1.2
	5	84	420	2.0
Four Consecutive 42-Day Terms	1	168	168	.8
	2	168	336	1.6
	3	168	504	2.4
	5	168	840	4.0
May Term 28 Days	3	7	21	.1
	6	7	42	.2
	3	14	42	.2
	6	14	84	.4
	1.5	28	42	.2
	3	28	84	.4
	4.5	28	126	.6

Thank you, Ms. Moore, and thank you, Dr. Wright. Before I tell you how we are going to organize ourselves for the last event of the evening, let me explain the sequence of events after tonight.

First of all, take your report home with you. Read it carefully. Many, many hours of work by many people have gone into this venture. The *Hometown Chronicle* will reprint the report in its entirety — one section at a time over the next six weeks. The editor will be setting aside two full pages for "Letters to the Editor" each week. We encourage each of you to write to the *Chronicle* as well as to Ms. Moore directly.

Our steering committee will read and study all of your responses, including the immediate feedback you give us tonight. We will use these in making revisions and developing policy statements for the Hometown School Board to consider. The school board will be scheduling meetings at each school during the month of February to obtain the views of the community on the policy statements. Action will be taken on the proposed policies at the March meeting of the board.

Now, as to the conclusion of our evening. We're going to open the two large conference rooms on either side of the ballroom. I've asked some 80 persons who have been in the study groups to scatter themselves around this huge area. You can tell who they are — each of them will have a sign on a stick which reads, "Small Group Secretary." They will have notepaper and pencil in hand for the eight to ten people who will gather around each of them to form a discussion group. We will not reconvene again as one group. The secretaries will be responsible for giving the steering committee unsummarized lists of comments and recommendations. . . Thank you for coming out this evening — I will indicate when the 45 minutes are over; by my watch that should be about 10:15. . . .

Most people who had come for the presentations stayed for the 45-minute feedback session.

There was discussion about most of the main topics in the report; however, people were much more intense when it came around to talking about the longer school year. This was the one topic which touched virtually everyone in the community in one way or another.

At the conclusion of the 45-minute period, Mr. Johnson rang an old-fashioned hand school bell. Even though many shades of opinion had been expressed, Mr. Johnson could sense that people had an optimistic, positive feeling about the evening as they left. They realized that Hometown had some important issues to face and that the report and presentations had addressed these issues in a well thought-out and forceful manner.

Event 10.

Superintendent Wright reminisces about the past ten years and starts thinking about his future.

Scene.

It's a chilly Wednesday evening in mid-November, 1998. Bill Wright is at home stretching out in his favorite lounge chair in front of the fireplace in the den. He's thinking over what has happened in the Hometown Public Schools since he took over as superintendent in July of 1989.

It has been five years since the community banquet at the Sheraton where the final plans for reorganizing the school district were unveiled and the Septuple School Calendar was introduced. This seemed to have been the pivotal event of his time in Hometown.

Early in January, 1994, the school board was notified that the Hometown Public Schools had been designated as one of the twenty school districts to pilot test longer school years. This meant that the Septuple School Year had an excellent chance of materializing in Hometown.

Bill remembered his struggle with the grant officer to change the "shape" of the grant. The plan was to give each school district decreasing amounts each year over the five-year period: $500,000, $350,000, $250,000, $150,000, and $100,000. He made three trips to Washington to plead his case for a "more bell-shaped curve" distribution of funds: $150,000, $300,000, $450,000, $300,000, and $150,000. He argued persuasively that this would allow Hometown to do a number of things: expand curriculum in a more measured and meaningful way; develop strategies to attract students into classes and workshops during the May and July terms; expand the resource base for independent study projects and other means for pupils to study and learn in non-classroom modes; and implement a local tax-supported bonus plan to encourage twenty-three teachers to retire during the first three years of the grant.

The Office of Education finally bought his arguments — in fact, they were so persuaded that they encouraged six other pilot districts to accept the same bell-shaped curve pattern of funding.

And now, in the fall of 1998, it was decision time for Bill Wright. The ten years he himself had set as the limit that a superintendent should remain in one school district was fast coming to an end. Thoughts of the future kept mixing in with the reminiscences of the past. . . .Let's listen in on Bill's monologue to himself. . . .

Superintendents should have the right to talk to themselves. We spend so much of our time talking to, at, and through other people. And the rest of the time we're on the receiving end of other people's talk! Anyway, it's kind of relaxing to talk to yourself — and really know just about everything there is to know about the person you're talking to!

I have to admit that I had my doubts back there in 1989 as to whether or not what I was proposing really could be explained to a school staff and a school board. And if they understood it, would they buy it?

The initial responses to my invitation to participate in planning educational charters was modest to say the least. But why should they trust me — and more importantly, was the idea that teachers would be in charge of instruction for real? Did I have something up my sleeve — and would the school board back me up at crunch time if a group of teachers fell flat on their faces?

Well, thank goodness, that never happened. But the most discouraging thing to me was that there were so many teachers in Hometown who wanted no part in curriculum planning and making decisions about things which were crucial to teaching. And this was a bit ironic in that the Hometown Teachers Association had demanded for years that teachers have more say on instructional matters.

Fortunately, there were a number of brave souls who took up the challenge. Eventually the balance was tipped when more and more teachers decided to follow their lead in planning and implementing educational charters.

I don't think the longer school year would have been possible had not teachers already been able to develop some good long-range planning skills through their involvement with charters. Without having had this kind of responsibility and experience, teachers would have had a great deal of difficulty dealing with questions like: If we expand the school year from 180 to 210 days (an increase of one sixth), how do we "increase" curriculum? Do we hold content to what we are barely able to cover now and teach this more intensively? Do we introduce more subjects or units? How do we organize the short-term workshops and courses for the May and July terms? Should we go for more process rather than more content? It was the teachers' ability to develop creative responses to these kinds of questions which put some real substance into our request to be designated as one of the twenty pilot school districts.

A number of people have asked me, "Bill, did you have all this worked out before you came to Hometown?" as if I had some kind of secret battle plan in the bottom desk drawer which I could turn to each week and see what my next move was going to be!

I guess I can say to myself, at least, it wasn't like that at all. I did come in with a strong missionary zeal that teachers had to be given (or even forced to be made to take) responsibility for instruction — and that educational charters might just be the vehicle to make this happen.

But once educational charters took hold, other things no longer seemed to fit. From this I saw the necessity of restructuring the K-12 functions. The fact that the longer school year was a plank in the platform of the winning political party in 1992 gave us some impetus for going all the way in creating a new organization for the Hometown schools.

I would never have guessed the amount of energy created when teachers realized that they could conceptualize and carry out an interesting and varied five-to-ten-year career plan which included: classroom teaching; planning and curriculum development activities; actually creating instructional materials which they could use and which might be of use in other school districts; and serving a two or three-year stint as an administrator or specialist. And this kind of environment helped them to see that classroom teaching was the paramount activity of the school district — always at the very center of things.

They could leave teaching for a period of time and always come back to the classroom without any loss of pay or status.

And now, what about myself? I've really gone out on a limb by espousing that ten years is the maximum length of time a person should be superintendent of the same school district. Hometown has been a challenging place to work and our family really enjoys living here — and our children are just now realizing the excitement of revitalized classes and schools. Four of the five members of the school board have let me know that they are ready to offer me another five year contract.

But perhaps the point of view of the fifth person on the school board is more important to me. When Ms. Moore decided not to seek another term, a Ms. Blackburn won out over a field of five candidates in a campaign in which she emphasized, "Too many things have happened in the Hometown schools in the past few years. It's time to slow down and consolidate all the gains we have made." I think you can guess what she meant by "consolidate" and "gains."

Well, I'm not without opportunities. I'm one of five finalists for the position of superintendent for River City (population 125,000). The proposed salary of $105,000 is rather attractive when I compare it to what I'm making now. I purposely held down my own salary in order to achieve a single salary schedule for teachers, specialists, and administrators.

I have already been offered the position of chairperson of the Department of Educational Administration and Leadership at State University. There would be no increase in pay here, but it would give me a chance to do some writing and research on school district organization.

And I'm attracted to a position which has just opened up in the U.S. Office of Education, that of heading the federal effort to help states implement the best features of the new, longer school years piloted by the twenty school districts. I don't think this would be a politically vulnerable position. Could any administration back away from the present national commitment to move all public education to a 210+ day school year? If I did a reasonably good job with this, I don't think I would be replaced if there were a change in administration. Or would I? I might just be into some wishful thinking here!

I've never been strong on security for myself. I'm much too restless to let "holding on to a job" dominate any decision about the future. Four choices, not bad for an adminstrator who has just celebrated his 45th birthday. . .Maybe I should heed the advice I gave my teachers in our career planning seminars: "The next step is important but the step *after* the next step is crucial!"

Where will today's decision at 45 years of age leave me at the end of the next five or ten years? Got to think and plan long range, you know. . . .

Bill started to doze. The monologue changed from coherent talk to muttering to himself and dreaming about what has been and what is to be. . .being satisfied about what he had accomplished but feeling a bit unsure as to what future path to follow. . .

> *We build houses,*
> *and then they build us.*
> — Frank Lloyd Wright

Summary and Other Considerations

95 Meeting the twelve goals of reorganization
97 Other strategies for reorganizing a school district
97 Cost of reorganizing a school district
98 Reorganizing the school district as well as schools
99 Relationship to other proposed reforms
99 The real essence of organization

115

116

Summary and Other Considerations

We leave Dr. Wright dozing and dreaming in front of the slowly dying fire. . .

To summarize, we'll examine the extent to which the twelve goals of school district reorganization have been accomplished (or have the possibility of being accomplished) within the new organization of the Hometown Public Schools. Then we'll conclude with a number of ideas related to reorganizing school districts.

Meeting the twelve goals of reorganization

Let's admit here that we're dealing with a stacked deck. The author developed the twelve goals which a school board and educational staff should be able to accomplish within the framework of a reorganized school district. He then wrote the "case study" of how one Dr. Wright, within a ten-year period, provided the leadership for totally reorganizing the Hometown Public Schools. It would be strange, indeed, if there were little or no relationship between the features of the *new* Hometown Public Schools and the goals for reorganizing the American school district.

With your forbearance then, here are some comments on how certain features of the new organization help the Hometown Public Schools accomplish the goals of reorganization. (See Page 18 for the initial wording of the goals for reorganization.) Where there are strong connections between or among features and goals, two or three goals are considered together.

Goal 1. Teachers are given responsibility for and control over instruction through the mechanism of educational charters. Educational charters allow groups of teachers to receive direct funding from the school board for planning and implementing plans for instruction. All nine of the K-12 functions support teachers in their efforts to carry out the provisions of their educational charters.

Goal 2. If teachers are given control over teaching, it follows that teachers must accept as their first priority helping pupils take responsibility for *their* learning and behavior. This also implies that teachers must make sure that the manner in which pupils accept these responsibilities happens in such a way that pupils develop skills and build attitudes to become lifelong learners. Two K-12 functions in particular were established to support students in these efforts: STUDENT LEARNING AND CAREER SERVICES and CITIZENS EDUCATION COUNCIL. A yet to be achieved goal of the Hometown Public Schools is the development and use of individual educational plans for all students.

Goals 3, 4, and 5. Within a longer school year and over a period of years, Hometown teachers, within their areas of interest and fields of qualification, are given opportunities to take on varied, non-teaching, professional-level responsibilities. To do this, goals of teachers' long-term career plans are linked with curriculum, program, and services needs of the school district. To support this, the school board and the Hometown Teachers

Association cooperatively operate and jointly fund the EDUCATORS CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER.

Goal 6. With RESOURCES FOR EDUCATION, Dr. Wright installed multi-year, computer-based, program budgeting/accounting as the fiscal system for the school district. This allows for planning and operating beyond the constraints and mind-set of the single fiscal/school year.

Goal 7. Education by Charter encourages and allows principals to do what principals in "effective schools" are already doing: creating and maintaining a safe, positive learning environment within the school; supporting teachers in carrying out their responsibilities for teaching; and, on occasion, being visible models of "good teacher" and "good learner."

Goal 8. To avoid the situation where teachers or administrators have control over their own monitoring and evaluation, the school board established and funds a PROGRAM MONITORING AND EVALUATION function which is directed by an able person from outside the school district. The composition of individual monitoring and evaluation teams is carefully balanced as to role and interest.

Goals 9 and 10. Using the services of the RESOURCES FOR EDUCATION and the KNOWLEDGE AND CURRICULUM functions and the MEDIA AND TECHNONLOGY CENTER, Hometown teachers are tapping in closer and closer to the cutting edge of new knowledge. Gone is the over-reliance on pablum-like, commercially published textbooks, references, and ditto masters. Using the services of "Speedy Copy and Print Shop (Three Color Capability)," a franchise located in the superintendent's administrative wing, teachers are now writing and producing about 75% of the instructional materials used in their classes. By 1999, with technical assistance and training programs of the MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY CENTER, there will be extensive use of computers, data bases, and various combinations of media.

Goal 11. Under Bill Wright's leadership, the Hometown Public Schools made a major effort to move "educational research" from higher education to the school district level where it would be "right next to" and "woven into" the very fabric of learning, teaching and service providing. In addition to participating in one of four levels of research, teachers are encouraged to write professional books and articles and to be presenters at state and national meetings. Responsibility for supporting and coordinating EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND PROFESSIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS was assumed initially by the superintendent and the principals.

Goal 12. All K-12 functions are considered to be "sitting on the boundary" between the school district and its environment. To mix a few metaphors, the functions serve both as "windows" to the outside world as well as "funnels" through which ideas and resources come into the school district. In particular, the cooperative funding of the CITIZENS EDUCATION COUNCIL, INC. and the County Manpower Development Council should strengthen ties between education and business, labor, parents, and other citizens.

A skeptic might ask, "So. . .the twelve goals are now being accomplished within the Hometown Public Schools. How do we know that *things* have really changed? How do we know that the *new organization* is any different from the old one?

Very simply, all the major roles in the school district have changed. The nature of the relationships and the interaction among the persons in the major positions are significantly different by 1999 from what they were in 1989.

Other strategies for reorganizing a school district

Though proposed as a general list of goals which could be realized under a new structure of school district, the above stated twelve goals, obviously, are not the only combination of goals which could be accomplished through reorganization. And, certainly, Education by Charter with its supporting K-12 functions and service-oriented administrative roles is not the only model to consider if school district reorganization is contemplated.

If we were to turn all the schools in a school district into "communities of scholars" as proposed by Roland Barth (see page 7), there would be dramatic changes in the major roles within the school district. Not only would the organization of the school district be changed if we did this, but we would probably have to change the organization of the school district *in order to change* schools into communities of scholars from what they are now.

Carl Marburger would build a new school district organization by making individual schools "autonomous."[26] (All of Roland Barth's schools would probably be "autononous," but not all of Marburger's schools would necessarily be "communities of learners!")

A most intriguing new model of the school district is proposed in a recent publication of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD). The title indicates something of the tenor and spirit of this model, *Productive School Systems for a Nonrational World.* Among the basic premises of the nonrational model of a school district are:

> There are multiple, sometimes competing sets of goals that attempt to provide direction for us. The district goals are somewhat ambiguous and general in nature. The goals change as conditions change. Organizational goals are arrived at through bargaining and compromise. . .
>
> Having access to information, support, and resources is the basis for power to make things happen. Power to make things happen is located throughout the organization. . .
>
> The decision-making process accommodates various forces shaping eventual decisions (e.g., external pressures and persistence of people in their points of view). . .
>
> The external environment maintains an active level of involvement in organizational affairs. . .The external environment demands a piece of the action at virtually every point in the decision-making process.
>
> There is a somewhat fuzzy picture of best instructional methods to achieve organizational goals. There is a multiple array of effective practices to improve learning. School board policymaking bears very little direct relationship to teaching and learning in the classroom.[27]

The title of the chapter from which the above quotation was taken poses an interesting nonrationality all its own: "Is the Nonrational Model More Reasonable?"

Education by Charter is but one of numerous options which school boards and educators can consider if they feel there is a substantial need for changing how their school district is organized and how it functions.

Cost of reorganizing a school district

Would reorganizing a school district cost taxpayers more money than they are now spending to support the present school district organization? The answer to this question: generally yes.

- Yes, by a relatively small amount, if during the initial years of reorganization, teachers were paid stipends for planning charters and preparing to teach under charters.
- Yes, by a relatively small amount, if, instead of the school district purchasing commercial instructional materials, teachers created and the school district published most of the instructional materials used in classrooms.
- Yes, by at least 11% if the work year for teachers was increased from 186 to 206 days. Yes, by at least 23% if the work year for teachers increased from 186 to 229 days.
- Yes, by a small amount, for maintaining and repairing facilities should the school year be lengthened. (Many school districts are finding it economical to use commercial cleaning services which function during evenings and weekends. This option might become even more attractive should the long summer vacation disappear.)
- No, by a substantial amount, if teachers, being paid on the single, standard salary schedule filled most of the administrative, staff, and specialist positions in the school district.
- Yes, by a significant amount, if the number of administrative, staff, and specialist positions are increased.

As is obvious, the major increase in costs would occur if the school year for pupils and the work year for teachers are increased significantly. Inasmuch as a number of wider societal goals would be accomplished by lengthening the school year, it is most appropriate that the increased cost for doing this be borne each year by the state and/or federal governments.

Reorganizing the *school district* as well as *schools*

We have strong evidence that the individual school is the unit on which to focus if we want teachers to become better teachers and pupils to become more effective learners. And we also know that the school principal is the key figure in setting the tone and creating the climate within which positive change occurs.

Why focus on the *school district* if "school improvement" inevitably does and must happen in individual schools? Given the times and circumstances of the late 1980's, there are at least four reasons for focusing on the *school district* as well as the *individual school*:

1. The various calls for educational reform center on components of the whole school system not just on individual schools.
2. The factors underlying the need for educational reform are communitywide, national, and even international in scope.
3. The problems faced by education are systemic in nature, crossing all age levels of schooling as well as crossing the borders between schools and family and family and community.
4. The kinds of solutions needed to solve the current major problems are not individual school-level solutions.

We certainly should take advantage of what we know about improving education in individual schools. And we should continue our efforts to extend the vision and upgrade the skills of principals. But if American education is going to take that quantum leap in quality needed for living in the next century, structural changes will need to be made at organizational levels above the individual school.

Relationship to other proposed reforms

There are numerous components of America's vast "educational system": the status level society gives to education and teaching; recruitment into the profession (which is in competition for talent with other occupations); teacher, administrator, and specialist preparation and credentialing; levels of financing and compensation; length of work year; etc. Often these components seem disconnected and isolated from one another. But when viewed over a period of two or three decades, these components interrelate with one another, and, as components of the total system, may function harmoniously or at cross purposes with one another.

As indicated earlier, reorganizing the school district may help make some of the other proposed reforms possible. Giving teachers control over instruction, providing them with meaningful and varied career experiences within the school year and over a period of years, making teaching a full-year job at a professional level of compensation — these changes in school districts (if widespread) could go far in motivating the present teaching staff as well as help make teaching a more attractive option for talented young persons who are at the point of choosing a professional preparation program.

And the reverse is equally true. Restructuring teacher preparation programs, improving certification and licensing requirements, providing a larger and more stable financial base for education, tailoring youth and adult education to be more responsive to the manpower needs of an ever-changing job market — these kinds of reforms and improvements will provide positive reinforcement for school boards and staffs seeking to improve education through restructuring school districts.

There is a temptation to think that the best way to upgrade American public education would be to implement the key reforms through some kind of "national master plan." Even if this were possible, such a national master plan would have little solid substance or sharp direction to it once it had been ground through the Washington lobbying and legislative processes. Given the fact that major decision-making power is in the hands of thousands of local school boards — given the fact that these boards must function within the framework of 50 different sets of state laws and regulations — and given the fact of variable support and a continually shifting mandate from the federal government — total educational reform will probably proceed along a ragged front and in a rather unpredictable manner during the remainder of the century.

The *real essence* of organization

Our main focus has been on the concept of organization. What, then, is the *real essence* of "organization?"

We call "organization" by a number of names: "it"; "those people"; "they"; "the establishment." Sometimes we don't like "it." "Those people" should do such and such because we think that's what "they" ought to do. And we often "rail against the establishment" when things don't go our way.

Often we try to capture organization on paper. Dr. Wright and his work group spent a number of hours trying to construct an "organizational chart" to show the relationships among persons in different positions in the school district. When we write job descriptions, we give titles to what people do and list their responsibilities.

But organization is really much more than this. Through our sensory systems, we receive virtually thousands of stimuli within a five-minute period of time. It is our capacity to sift through these many stimuli, accept some and reject others and then categorize those accepted into our mental framework that enables us to function in our daily lives.

In education (as well as in other fields), we have made a "field" out of organization — we call it "educational administration" or "educational leadership." The notion here is that there's some kind of magic which one can learn in graduate school which will enable him or her to "administer," to "lead," and/or to "organize" others who will then do the work. The author is inclined in the other direction. The capacity to organize is something that all of us have — must have — just in order to live each day. And given the variety of interests and personalities within a teaching staff (with some specialized training and intern experience), all administrative and specialist positions can, for designated periods of time, be filled by teachers.

Organization gives us boundaries which provide parameters for freedom and restraint. Within an organization, other people's as well as our own expectations "tell us" what we must do, what we can do, what we must not do, and what we may avoid doing.

And the boundaries within an organization determine territories and ownership rights and privileges. The main rationale for Education by Charter involves placing the ownership of instruction with teachers and the ownership of learning with pupils.

- A teacher who psychologically "owns" the function of instructions will have a mind-set something like this: "This is my classroom. These are my desks and my chairs and my books and my learning materials which I will use to teach my pupils what they need to learn. . ."
- And the teacher must be willing for the pupils to "own" the other end of the teaching-learning process. If this happens, the pupils' attitude toward school will be something like this: "I look forward to going to school each day. My teacher likes me and does a lot to help me. School means a lot to me. I am learning a lot that makes sense to me. It's important to me to be here so that I can be a part of what goes on in school. . ."

Dr. Wright and his work group struggled to capture the new organization of the Hometown schools on paper. But the important thing about organization is that organization is in our heads — we carry "it" around with us as we go through our day.

In 1985, the parents of Barrington, Rhode Island decided they wanted to build a children's playground in back of the town hall. They secured the services of Robert S. Leathers, a nationally known architect-consultant, who assists communities in building playgrounds to fit their needs.

Mr. Leathers has many ideas in his head about the different kinds of swings and slides and poles and steps and tunnels and caves and towers from which selections can be made to design and construct one playground. Parents, too, have ideas in their heads about the kinds of equipment they want to see incorporated into a proposed playground.

After several evenings of intense discussion, Mr. Leathers started to get a sense of the ethos of Barrington and some of the priorities of the parents. He took all these ideas and was able to develop a design (an "organization in his head") for a children's playground for Barrington, Rhode Island.

Then with materials supplied by businesses of the community, the parents, under the supervision of the architect, actually constructed the playground — translating what was in his head into the desired forms of wood, steel, rubber, bolts, and sand.

And what about three-year-old Michael? On his first visit to the playground, he sees a rather awesome conglomeration of boards and poles and metal sitting on top of piles of sand that he has trouble walking in! But, with mother in hand, he starts exploring. He has fun on the "wobbly walk" and, after some hesitation, he tries the long slide. He gets enough courage to leave his mother and ventures up into the higher spaces near the tower. Here he tumbles down a few high steps and has to be rescued.

Gradually, Michael starts to build this playground in his head. On succeeding visits he will go right to the wobbly walk and the slide. He avoids the higher spaces where he got hurt. After his third visit, "his" playground, his organization of the playground is firmly imbedded in his consciousness. He has set up his boundaries. He knows where he can go in the complicated structure and have fun; he knows the places he wants to avoid; the Robert S. Leathers playground is now in his head.

It's never a question of no organization or doing away with organization. Our challenge in to build and maintain organizations in which people, over a continuing period of time, can fulfill the mission of the organization and accomplish its purposes. Can we in education build and maintain a school district organization within which teachers own the function of instruction and, through their efforts, pupils learn what they need to know and, in the process, acquire the attitudes and skills to become lifelong learners? Education by Charter within a ten-year plan is one way this might be accomplished.

References

1. National Commission on Excellence in Education, *A Nation at Risk: the Imperative for Educational Reform* (as reprinted by the American Association of School Administrators), 1983.
2. Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, the Report of the Task Force on Teaching as a Profession, *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century*, May, 1986.
3. National Governor's Association, Center for Policy Research and Analysis, *Time for Results: The Governors' 1991 Report on Education*, 1986.
4. Idea initially introduced in John Dewey, "Democracy in Education," *The Elementary School Teacher*, December, 1903, pp. 195-198. The article was subsequently revised and reprinted in *Progressive Education*, Vol. VIII, No. 3, pp. 216-218 and in *Education Today*, edited by Joseph Ratner, Putnam and Sons, New York, 1940, pp. 62-73.
5. *A Nation at Risk*, p. 11.
6. *A Nation Prepared*, pp. 25, 55, and 56.
7. Denis P. Doyle, "Teacher Choice: Does it Have a Future?" paper prepared for the Task Force on Teaching as a Profession, Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, March, 1986, pp. 15 and 16.
8. *Time for Results*, p. 38.

9. *Time for Results*, p. 56.
10. *A Nation at Risk*, p. 11.
11. *A Nation Prepared*, p. 61 (paragraph divided into shorter sub-paragraphs to emphasize train of thought).
12. *Time for Results*, pp. 38, 58, and 59.
13. Roland S. Barth, "Effective School Leadership," Supporting Work, Task Force on Leadership and Management, *Time for Results: The Governors' 1991 Report on Education*, August, 1986, pp. 80 and 81.
14. The Institute for Educational Leadership, *School Boards — Strengthening Grass Roots Leadership*, Washington, D.C., November, 1986, p. i.
15. *School Boards — Strengthening Grass Roots Leadership*, pp. 51-55.
16. *Time for Results*, pp. 68 and 69.
17. John Dewey, "Democracy in Education," *The Elementary School Teacher*, 1903, pp.198-199.
18. Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, The Harvard Classics, Vol. 36, pp. 21, 22. (Divided into sub-paragraphs to assist the reader.)
19. *Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged*, G. C. Merriam Company, Springfield, Massachusetts, 1971, pp. 1589, 1590.
20. A reference for this section: Ronald J. Fitzgerald, *Guidelines for Negotiating Teams Interested in Facilitating Improvement in Educational Programs*, Doctoral Dissertation, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, July 1977.
21. *Webster's III*, p. 378.
22. Llwelyn Powys, *Henry Hudson*, Harper Brothers, New York, 1928, pp. 77-78.
23. *Webster's III*, p. 378.
24. Quotation from Martha Barton in article by Ginger Harvill, "Teaching children how to learn," *Christian Science Monitor*, February 3, 1986, p. 27.
25. Lewis A. Rhodes, "Introducing Technology to Schools — New Tools Make Old Tasks Easy, New Ones Exciting," *The School Administrator*, April, 1987, pp. 10 and 11.
26. Carl L. Marburger, *One School at a Time — School Based Management, a Process for Change*, the National Committee for Citizens in Education, Columbia, Maryland, 1985.
27. Jerry L. Patterson, Stewart C. Parker, and Jackson V. Parker, *Productive School Systems for a Nonrational World*, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Alexandria, Virginia, 1984, pp. 40 and 41.

About the Author

Ray Budde has always had a strong interest in "the way things are organized" and "how things work or don't work within an organization."

As the junior high school principal in East Lansing, Michigan, he implemented a form of school organization in which double-period classes in English-Social Studies served a number of functions: instruction; homeroom; group guidance class; the local unit of student government; the means for organizing school sports teams; and the channel for communicating with parents.

Dr. Budde served as a faculty member at the University of Massachusetts during the late 1960's when the School of Education, under the leadership of Dean Dwight Allen, was completely reorganized. What a priceless inservice education experience in "restructuring" this was for a person who was teaching educational administration!

The concept of Education by Charter was first introduced in 1974 to the Systems Education Section of the annual meeting of the Society for General Systems Research. The title of the presentation as subsequently published in the proceedings of the meeting was: "Education by Charter — Key to a New Model of School District." In this book, Budde extends the concept to include many of the recommendations made by current major studies.

Education by Charter is one proposal for reorganizing local school districts in a substantially new and different way. Budde maintains that unless school district restructuring takes place, the school improvement movement of the 1980's to upgrade American public education will probably fail.